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LT.-COLONEL SIR REGINALD RANKIN Bt

A NOTEBOOK IN CORSICA, A NIGHT IN THE OPEN AT 22,000 FEET, PIG-STICKING AT JODHPUR, CANADA IN '95 AND OTHER ESSAYS

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Lt.-Colonel Sir Reginald Rankin Bt.

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A Notebook in Corsica, A Night in the Open at 22,000 feet, Pig-sticking at Jodhpur, Canada in '95 and other Essays

By

Lt.-Colonel Sir Reginald Rankin Bt.

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Printed in Great Britain by
RICHARD CLAY & SONS, LIMITED
BUNGAY
SUFFOLK

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A NOTEBOOK IN CORSICA

A NOTEBOOK IN CORSICA

April 8, *Wed.*

MARSEILLES is a pandemonium—the City of Dreadful Noise. It is as though the Devil had presented all the gutter-snipes with a tin trumpet apiece, to outvie one another in cacophony.

The fact is that every tram and every motor car has a similar organ of offence; and trams and motor cars in Marseilles are everywhere and innumerable. At night comes no surcease from the pseudo-military cachinnation; but a bass obbligato is added by means of the banging of countless venetian shutters, sounding to the uninitiated like independent firing of batteries of *soixante-quinzes*.

Soon after 11 a.m. we boarded the s.s. *General Bonaparte*, and sailed at noon for Bastia. When approached on the subject of lunch, the steward swore by all his gods that no food would be served till 7 p.m. I had sufficient self-restraint to avoid a frontal attack, and, manœuvring with a 20 fr. note, found myself at once in an excellent tactical situation. The limit in greedy bluff. The *déjeuner* was very good, and the sea not by any means calm.

After an excellent dinner people began to retire, for the hour of debarkation at Bastia was 4 a.m.

April 9, *Thurs.* (in next cabin). H. began a raucous and interminable conversation with a voluble Corsican at 2 a.m., and effectually put an end to my intermittent slumbers. No thumps on the partition availed to stop them. It is curious how callous as to other people's comfort some naturally considerate persons can be.

Had a *café complet* at a dirty hotel, after a most refreshing cold bath, and then took a motor and drove all through the town and its environs. Bastia is a long straggling town of yellow, green-shuttered, seven-storied houses, hugging the blue sea and backed by the purple hills. The old Port is a congeries of the narrowest streets, reminiscent of Edinburgh wynds.

Out in the country, eucalyptus, poplars, planes and willows fringed the road; the flat malarial plain spread eastwards, and garlic, hawthorn, asphadel, anemones, gorse, and aloes dotted all the hedges.

The red ferruginous soil was striated with the black stumps of vines, and often the rosy splendour of a peach tree struck vividly against the ochreous walls of a homestead. Elba—a hogsback of rock—was to the west, and the famous Monte Cristo to the east, across a misty sea. The roads were mere quagmires after three days' rain; entirely unmetalled, they carried ruts that threatened our plucky car with momentary extinction.

At noon we boarded the train for Ajaccio and wound our way through the magnificent gorges of the Golo—an ideal trout stream—flanked by the eternal snows of D'Oro and Rotundo—about 100 miles took six hours to accomplish, but it was well worth it.

The shock of our lives came when we found that the disobliging landlord of the Continental (the only decent hotel in the place) had let our carefully-ordered rooms, because we were a day late, owing to the connecting boat at Marseilles being cram-full. He shipped us off to a horrible hotel in the slums of a slummy town, and thence we were kicked on to some filthy " rooms " in a suburb. When we got there it was eight and a half hours since we'd tasted food; and nothing on earth mattered except dinner.

So back to the hotel we rushed, and never did I find such good manna, or such bad manners. The solution was, of course, that La Corse was plumb-full of French

(I should say "Continental") visitors for the *Jours de Pâques*. The black-coated gentry swarmed in every street, and we were thankful to have found a kennel in which to lay our heads.

I determined on flight, and bribed the over-driven garçon of the restaurant to put me on to a good chauffeur and car. He bade me come at nine to-morrow and have *chota hazri*, when he would introduce the genuine article.

April 10, *Friday*. The garçon was as good as his word. Geoffrey and his Renault turned up, and were duly engaged at 120 fr. a day to go anywhere and do anything, including fishing. Geoffrey is a short, dark, smiling fellow with grey eyes and a clipped moustache, and he wears a round dark blue cap with the oddest appendage (or appendix) sticking up, like a small rat's tail, vertically from the summit. It was indeed a case of a word and a blow.

Engaged at 9.30 a.m., Geoffrey wheeled off his party at 1.30 p.m.; we having in the meantime unpacked all our heavy baggage and repacked with a view to the restricted assimilative capacity of Renault.

Ajaccio fringes the edge of a splendid bay, land-locked by rounded hills it gives an idea of Plymouth. As at Bastia, the houses are all skyscrapers of seven stories, and the streets are as dirty and unkempt as there.

We shall see Ajaccio again; for the nonce we will turn our backs on the noisy, crow-like herd of holiday makers, and rush our Renault deep into the hills.

Our route is by Ocagna and Tolla to Bastelica, about 45 km. inland. The road is actually not marked on the map (that is one of Geoffrey's merits), and few drivers would or could negotiate it without mishap. Such *virages*, such hairpin turns, such imminent precipices and shaky wooden bridges! And such mountains towering in their granite strength over the deep-bitten gorge of Prunelli, foaming seawards, and tiny fortressed villages with

protecting campaniles poised on emerald fields or encircled by grey olives and sweet chestnuts reddening with the promise of spring, and dark pines riven by leaping surging torrents.

And so we come to Bastelica—the end of the road, whence only mountain paths lead onwards over the snowy slopes of great Renoso. Perhaps we are amongst a dozen or so English who have ever visited this remote spot. My favourite Corsican authority, the famous writer of the Book of Nonsense, Edward Lear, says that his friend, Miss Campbell, came hither in 1858, but, on April 14th, turned and retraced her steps to Ajaccio, frightened away by the cold. And cold it certainly is now; but *revocare gradus* is out of the question; rather will we *superas evadere ad auras*.

To quote Hachette's excellent guide to Corsica: "It was in the hamlet of Dominicacci that was born, at the end of the 15th century, Sampiero, a hero of whom the Corsicans are as rightly proud as of Paoli and Napoleon. A scion of the house of Ornano, son of William, he went early to the Continent, became, by reason of his intelligence and courage, captain in the black bands of Florence, passed into the service of Francis I, who made him colonel-general of the Corsican guards, and made himself illustrious by his great deeds. Already celebrated, he married his cousin, the beautiful Vanina, the heiress of the Ornanos. He persuaded Henri II to undertake the Conquest of Corsica; the Genoese were chased from the island, and on the 15th September, 1557, Jourdain des Ursins (Orsini), Viceroy of Corsica for Henri II proclaimed the incorporation of the island with the Crown of France, in such fashion that the King could never abandon it any less than he could abandon his own crown. But the treaty of Cateau Cambresis (after the battle of St. Quentin) ceded Corsica to Genoa.

"Thenceforward, Sampiero devoted all his influence to the raising of enemies against the Republic. For four years he traversed Europe, soliciting aid and succour from all. Received by the Courts of Navarre and Florence with all the regard due to his reputation for courage and loyalty, he nevertheless obtained only promises. Landing afresh on the island with twenty-five Corsicans and twenty-five Frenchmen, he sunk the two galleys that had carried him and his companions and recommenced the struggle.

"Despairing of conquering him the Genoese had him assassinated in 1567."

In another passage the excellent Hachette writes: "In 1553 Sampiero de Bastelica, colonel-general of the Corsicans in the service of France, profiting by the alliance of Genoa with the Emperor, obtained from Henri II the despatch to Corsica of a body of troops commanded by the Marshal de Thermes. From the moment of their arrival the French were acclaimed as liberators. The fleet of Henri II, helped by the Turkish Corsairs, seized Bonifacio while Bastia, Saint Florent and Ajaccio opened their gates. Soon Calvi alone remained to the Genoese. The latter then sent to Corsica their illustrious admiral, Andrea Doria, who found in Sampiero a foeman worthy of his steel. The struggle went on for five years, with desperate fighting. The government of Henri II incorporated Corsica with the Kingdom of France. . . .

"Sampiero's wife, Vanina, having consented to treat with the agents of the Republic in order to preserve the patrimony of their children, he did not hesitate to put her to death with his own hands. (Marseille, 1562.) After this act of a savage driven to despair, Sampiero returned to Corsica. His last battles, says Colonna, surpassed in honour all that preceded them. His enemies no longer knew any mercy. Sampiero threw his prisoners

as food to his dogs; the Genoese tortured the Corsicans that fell into their hands before hanging them; the very women perpetrated on the prisoners the most monstrous cruelties. Rage could no further go; the Dorias burnt villages entire."

At Vescovato, Sampiero threw the Genoese prisoners into the fire and poignarded with his own hand the Corsican captains whom he took in their ranks. At Moriani, the Genoese Francesco Giustiniano meted out the same fate to Pierre Giovanni d'Ornano. There was a continuous exchange of horrible reprisals. The proud and violent character of Sampiero was the cause of his undoing. Weary of his tyranny, many Corsican chiefs had abandoned him. Those of his comrades who had not the courage to affront him, openly betrayed him. In 1567 he perished in an ambush.

His statue stands in the centre of the village—a vigorous piece of work, set upon a pedestal of unhewn granite boulders. With left leg advanced the hero brandishes aloft his straight-hilted sword; his gaberdine bellies to the breeze. You can almost hear the thunder of his cheer. On the four sides of his monument are engraved:

(I) 1533-1542.	(II) 1544-1545.
Perpiguan	Landrecics
Fossino	Saint Dizier
Brignoles	Vitry
(III) 1553-1554.	(IV) 1564-1567.
Bastia	Ponte Leccia
Golo	Vescovato
Tenda	Luminanda

We are received at the Hôtel des Étrangers, a vile inn that defies description for uncleanliness and wretchedness,

by a couple of hoodie-craws in the guise of black-hooded and black-draped females who would make excellent models for the witches in Macbeth. Their nasal, raucous voices are raised to a shout, as though the obtuseness of the obvious foreigners is to be remedied by vociferation.

The so-called salon (God save the mark!) is up a flight of stone steps; large holes abound in the bare wooden floor; the walls are washed a dirty blue and dotted with crude oleographs; the huge fireplace is blocked up, because it is so warm; if we are cold, we can go into the kitchen. A suggestion that a fire might be lit in the salon evoked a nasal eruption of such astounding vehemence in the negative that we felt we had committed a *faux pas* of the worst kind.

The bedrooms led one out of the other. To get to mine I had to go through four others. My window-sill was decorated with a utensil, flanked by a pair of shoes, whose name is more honoured in the breach than in the observance.

But the supper was a grateful surprise. There was two-year-old wine of Cauro, sherry-like in colour and taste, and capital fried trout and a priceless omelette, and that best of cheese—Roquefort. Ah! that Roquefort! I had prudently brought a fat piece from Ajaccio, and when it appeared on the table I naturally opined that it was mine. And so, when one of the raucous harpies graciously handed it to a scoundrelly blackguard at another table, I raised a note of protest.

Then the row began. The harpy screamed like an over-laden she camel, and rushed from the room, appearing in an instant with three-quarters of a Roquefort, from which she declared, with many oaths, our hunk had been cut.

I asked Geoffrey where our hunk was, and when he failed to produce it, I tried to get level with Mrs. Harpy by telling her she had taken it, or alternatively, to put

it in legal phraseology, that we, in fact and verity, were eating our own cheese. This produced an ominous calm, and a series of very ugly frowning countenances. I fancied I saw the blackguardly bandit sharpening his knife on a crust. The impression of humiliation deepened as the meal went on. I felt that we were suspect; our Roquefort at best was an impromptu figment; the frequent and insistent " Monsieur's " to the blackguardly Italian were in themselves (camouflaged as invitations to salt or pepper) invitations to insult. What was the Italian like? He had the face of a criminal of the Apache type. His cap protruded a foot over his face and a foot behind; his Jewish nose hung over a wide sensual mouth; a prognathous jaw completed a picture of animal ferocity and cunning.

Presently, naturally, he got rather drunk. He was a driver of the mail to Ajaccio and so had to get to bed pretty early. But he got nasty earlier. He declared he had been wounded twice in the war (probably by his own officers' revolvers) and forthwith embarked on a scurrilous attack on our British artillery, which he—marking positions with spoons and forks—declared was always behind his gallant Italian batteries, and finally ran away. This was *un peu trop fort*, and I was making a frontal attack, and asking a few questions about Caporetto and Cavan's rescue before putting him to sleep, when commonsense and Geoffrey intervened, and I left the swine to slink off to bed. There, a few minutes later, he lay, the blanket huddled over his head, as I passed through the multitudinous hovels that led to my curiously decorative chamber.

Besides the grim hoodie-craws the hotel of the foreigners holds a young couple and their twenty months' old little girl—Ferroloni and his wife Isabelle and their child Josette. Ferroloni is a fine tall young fellow, very deaf and apparently unfitted by his disability for any

work outside the premises. Isabelle is a very dark, bright-eyed little woman, minus a canine, and Josette is the duckiest little creature you ever saw. Her golden brown curly hair is crowned with a huge blue satin bow; her eyes are brown and extremely intelligent; she wears a white knitted jersey and stockings, and her feet are clad in shoes about three inches long. Of these she is immensely proud and will point to them whispering deliciously "thouliers." She will also, when her mother sings a chanty, extend her little skirt with tiny hands and pirouette about the holey floor in an excessively feminine manner. But unfortunately, Josette is suffering from a cold, and hoodie-craw's black thumb and forefinger do not appeal to one as an adequate substitute for a handkerchief.

At night all the windows in the village were set with lighted candles; a long procession of dark-clad men and women followed the body of Christ, carried somewhat unseemly in a wicker basket.

I asked a boy what it was all about, as it was Good Friday; and he unexpectedly replied: "Parceque nous avons le Christ encore une fois." (I opine that the chronology of Bastelica is suspect.)

And so the long procession passed, with countless old ladies in black, marching in column of fours and wafting to the night airs the sad minor Gregorian hymns—*Pange lingua* and *Vexilla Regis*. At some future date I propose to compile a work on the hagiology of Corsica.

April 11*th*, *Saturday*. Explored the village, and noted the unusual custom of burying the dead in the paternal acres. A handsome effigy in the middle of a barley field is quite a common sight. I think this is an excellent idea, for a variety of reasons, chief of which, perhaps, is that the living are continually reminded of the dead, and so either live up to their noble example or determine not to follow in their degenerate footsteps.

Geoffrey and I then fished for trout in Prunelli; but, said the former, "The water is too cold for the fish to bite."

Personally, I eat more in cold weather than in hot; but doubtless trout are differently constituted. At all events we caught none. I then made a pen and ink sketch of the two bridges over Prunelli—hoary broken age cheek by jowl with rumbustical prime.

All this time you might have thought a pitched battle was raging in the village. Pistol shots rang out above the din of exploding crackers, and we approached our hostelry in search of lunch in some trepidation. A kiss from the darling little Josette, waving of unwashed hands on the part of the hagiology, and we take the road to Zicavo. The first village was Cauro, famous for its wine, which we duly sampled amid a concourse of holiday-makers, amongst whom I noticed an exceedingly pretty fair girl. The road was crowded with sounders of swine—black for the most part, Tamworth in the bourgeoisie, and with a patrician saddleback lending tone to the clan. From the motor they ran Gaderene-like, the old boars pushing their female relatives down steep places in their frenzied efforts to escape the oncoming Juggernaut, while a host of squealing porkers led the van of the retreating host.

But the feature of the day was the truly magnificent view from the Col de Saint Georges.

League upon league the mountains stretched away to snowy Renoso, with Guarella and Olagua clinging to their flanks—mere dots on the illimitable spaces of the hills.

It is impossible to describe scenery; but one can compare it. Probably nothing in Europe can rival the immensity of these Corsican landscapes. Beside them, Switzerland is a miniature. In general colouring they remind me of Killarney, and broom blazing on the

boulder-covered slopes is the counterpart of the Irish gorse. Dark, austere, at times wild and savage, generally toned to the quality of the prevailing maquis, but here and there lightened by an emerald alp or a belt of bright pines, a vineyard or a field of barley, a gleaming torrent or a wood of olives, these mountains give an extraordinary impression of grandeur and space; they are in very sooth the wide places of the earth.

And, after a glorious drive up a colossal hill, we arrived in due course at the Hôtel de l'Incudine of Zicavo.

April 12th, Sunday (Easter), 1925. The Incudine is the magnificent snowy peak that dominates a good half of Corsica, and from Zicavo you get a splendid view of it. Zicavo itself is built high up on a northern slope and the sun shines long in the valley far below while the village still lingers in the shade. Its church, built on a central buttress of the hill, has all the look of a guardian angel.

Alas! it is deluging with rain, but Geoffrey and I take the rods and embark for Guitère, where is the trout stream, and the famous hot sulphur springs. The baths are hardly comparable to those at Aix; dirty wooden cupboards about eight feet by four feet, and as mine host of the inn handed us a glass of water apiece, he remarked jocularly that personally he had more use for a bottle of good wine. Having drunk it I cordially agreed with him. A giant of a fellow was he, with a brown moustache of silky texture that stood out on either side six inches beyond his round face. A nice little girl with bobbed hair gave me a piece of pink soap and began sweeping the passage outside the bathrooms, and when I offered her a franc afterwards, she blushingly refused it on the ground that she was not the proprietress! However, I prevailed over that most ungreedy of infants.

Having inhaled a lot of nasty sulphurous fumes and feeling excessively debilitated, I proceeded to do a sketch

of the village, and then returned to lunch at the inn, which was shop as well as hotel, and where I prudently bought a packet of candles. The hostess begged me to come and stay, and showed me half a dozen bedrooms, all clean and in good order. But the outstanding feature of Corsican hostelries is the total absence of any sort of sanitary convenience, and when I commented on this grim fact: "Oui, c'est bien dommage" was all the comfort I received.

In the room where our portly friend of the inn was eating his *déjeuner* in magnificent isolation, magnificently tapping his knife upon his glass to summon his dour handmaiden (*æt.* 10) for the next course. The rafters were decorated with some very homelike sides of bacon. I suggested that we should have some fried, and Geoffrey gave the instructions. When we got up the corkscrew staircase to the *salle à manger*, we found not fried bacon, but several pieces of raw ham reposing in the umbrage of watercress.

I explained to Geoffrey that I was not in the habit of eating raw ham, and that the sooner it was fried the better. It withdrew and returned, indescribably salt and decidedly rancid, with a toughness that put my dentures on their metal.

H. says that he intends to make himself a pair of boots out of the mutton hashes he has been unable to masticate; but he fears the homogeneity of his footgear may haply be impaired by the introduction of a beef upper.

Our maid up the hill is called Angele, the one here Angeline, and two prettier names I defy you to produce. Angeline is a small miracle of efficiency, and dashes up and down the tortuous staircase carrying countless plates and dishes with a speed that would astonish a lizard, and a surefootedness that would extract a grudging tribute from a mouflon.

Finally I gave her five francs, and I verily believe she thought Rockefeller her financial inferior. Certainly we had lots to eat. After the fatal ham came a mountain of white local butter—a rarity and not bad—then a veal stew with morels; then an omelette, then beefsteak, then cheese, then fancy bread and figs, then coffee and Antilles rum, said to be the best in the world.

After lunch I decided to fish, although it was raining and Geoffrey said it was no good.

But raucous barks and shouts took us to the window, and there we saw the red-sashed ruffians of Guitère beguiling the tedium of Easter Sunday by organising dog-fights. (I confess that I regretted that the curs of Corsica were unlike her plane trees and did not shed their bark.) *Cur me querellis exanimas tuis?*

A huge fellow, clad in a shirt of blue and white check of portentous size and wearing a clerical sombrero, cuddled a small fawn mongrel and proudly matched it against the field. From an upper storey a cascade of snowy linen fell like a waterfall athwart the balustrade, threatening the dog-fighters with the imminent prospect of an envelopment in a white sheet—a consummation which their appearance did nothing to justify.

An idiot, by name Roguis, took us down to the river by a highly periculous and insanitary path through bogs and brambles; and when, after fearful exertions I reached the appointed spot, I discovered that it was only twenty yards from the high road. This spot was the wrecked bridge. The stone piers still stand, but the wooden footway was carried clean away by a twenty-foot flood in 1920. That must have been a spate worth seeing. To-day huge trout wallowed about the rocks, and Geoffrey got to work, but caught nothing. As it was raining hard I gave my rod to Toussaint, son of Roguis, a notable angler, *æt.* 15, who caught a small one and then had his tackle broken by a *monstrum horrendum ingens.*

And so back in the deluge to Zicavo, and the drawbridge from the road to the hotel and to Angele, *multum in parvo*, and to supper and to bed.

April 13th, Easter Monday. Motored from Zicavo to Sartène. Cultivation at these high altitudes is always carried on by means of little terraces fronted with an *abattis* of stones. Barley is the commonest crop. There is a gorgeous waterfall outside Zicavo, and polypody and scolopendrium are common in the rock crevices, and primroses bloom in the banks beside the road.

To-day we saw lavender, violets, gorse, bracken, spurge, zinnia, asphodel, euphrasy, forget-me-not, fumitory and a plant curiously like fennel, but with a sinister reputation that excellent herb does not possess. It is death to all animals that eat it and its name is *feriule*.

Why, I wonder, did the Greeks carpet their Elysian fields with asphodel? The only reason that I can think of (for it is a rather mean nondescript thing) is that from it emanates a certain ghostly, ghastly ethereal air—as of a lovesick maiden dying of a decline. We found, too, woods carpeted with blue and white *Anemone blanda* and *Orchis mascula*, veitch, blackthorn, birdsfoot trefoil and lupins.

Corsica might be called the country of the blacks; for its women, sheep, goats and pigs for the most part assume the funereal garb. So, too, do the men; and it is not unnatural that the major portion of the community should be in mourning when you remember that if you lose a parent, wife or child you wear black for the rest of your life (unless you marry again); and that the death of a cousin or a great-aunt assures you a sentence of seven years penal darkness.

Saw a good many cows, rather like Jerseys and very thin; but out of reverence for their great compatriot they consider themselves under an obligation to have some bony parts.

It is the custom here to prevent the milch-goats wandering too far afield by hobbling their near legs together. Often you observe fashionable Nanny waddling up the steep in hobble skirt.

Goat reminds me that at dinner to-day we had the most delicious dish I ever tasted. Madame Brocas, landlady of the most excellent *Hôtel de Césarer de l'Univers*, (no mean title) said it was " lamb " ; Geoffrey said it was " kid," and kid it proved to be—tender and true to racial characteristics.

As we mounted the hill at the top of which, a thousand feet above the sea, lies Sartène, we encountered sundry coarse-featured natives, evidently overtaken by Fête, asleep by the roadside, their docile mules grazing nearby.

The handsome hand-like hellebore grows handy; when they awake let them partake thereof, and their devils shall be exorcised.

April 14th, Tuesday. Spent the morning sketching the tall façade of this wonderful town. These architectural drawings are excessively difficult, and demand a concentration and brain sweat which the result seldom justifies. At lunch time in the *salle à manger*, there was immense excitement. A bridal procession was about to pass through the town. Madame Brocas, whose ancestors held the ground so well known to all Etonians, armed with a huge bowl of rice, was fingering her missiles with undisguised emotion. Presently the procession came down the street, headed by the bride and bridegroom, and followed by scores of men in top hats and evening dress (black ties and tail coats) and girls in their swaggerest walking-out kit, marching arm-in-arm. But two men in the ranks disgraced themselves; they wore billycocks above their boiled shirts. From every front door, as the happy pair passed, came a fusillade of rice, cutting like whips across the faces of the *mariés;* at which, to my great surprise, the bridegroom raised

his hat in well-assumed politeness. The Brocas was by now palpitating with ardour. From the dizzy elevation of the fifth storey she flung handful after handful at the unlucky pair; fortunately it all fell short into the gutter. I felt compelled to remonstrate with her, pointing out how uncomfortable it would feel in the bride's hair, but she replied, unabashed, that the bride could very well go home and comb it. After that, there was nothing more to be said. The procession petered out in a ruck of unfemaled hobbledehoys and rustics; one or two had the excessively bad taste to wear Homburg hats.

In the afternoon we drove to Tazzano by the sea, where we found a large squad of the processionists agreeably engaged in devouring *langoustes* in a preternaturally small shed outside a broken-down pothouse. We wanted to see some dolmens and menhirs hereabouts, but to see them involved either a five-mile walk over a very rough road or a rather rough cruise in a very small boat, so we declined both.

There is a gigantic rock in the middle of the valley here, polished and rounded. Evidently it has been subjected to the action of water or ice, probably the latter, and where no water nor ice has been for countless centuries. And we ephemerals stalk the earth and measure all things by our puny foot-rule.

April 15th, Wednesday. To-day has been a glorious day, and last night it was so hot that with all the windows open I sweated in bed.

Our objective was the mountain eyrie by name Olmeto, with Propiano to be seen by the way. The steep road down from Sartène passes numerous handsome mausoleums and groves of olive and cypress. There is a monastery of Cordelier monks, and the portly robed friars stroll lazily about their unkempt garden.

We passed through valleys much resembling Devonshire coombes, over a villainous road which sent us cup

and balling; so much did the effect resemble a channel crossing that H. irreverently remarked: "Bring up a breakfast in the way it should go . . ."

But the sunny freshness of the air, the great distances; the flower strewn pastures, the morn was an abiding delight. The new broom swept clean over the boulder-dotted slopes; and many a rocky knoll wore its crown of wild olive. Tiny daisies strewed the glades; as though a recent hailstorm lay fresh upon the grass. Yellow butterflies flickered about the dark lentisks; a cuckoo flew over head; swallows flashed above the ochreous fields.

And so we came to Propriano. It is a growing port, lying on a lovely curving bay of that azure sea which a youthful relative of mine used to call the Merrygeranium. It deals in charcoal and timber, exported chiefly to Barcelona; and its position gives it an advantage over Bastia and Ajaccio for trade with Spain and North Africa. A steamer lay by the shore, and huge motor lorries carrying immense loads of charcoal thundered down to the dock.

Where the azure melted into gleaming surf on a strand covered with pink convolvulus the road led upwards through dark avenues of oleaster and rock rose—now here and there showing a brilliant yellow-stamened bloom. (H. had the impudence to remark that Corsica might tersely be defined as rows of rocks and rock roses.)

And then Olmeto burst upon us. A crow's nest hanging to the steep flank of its protecting mountain, ochre-roofed, ablaze in the sunshine, dark-shadowed. Of Olmeto, friend Lear writes:

"The view from here is one marked by extremely delicate beauty. The olives on the slopes below the town more than ever remind me of those at Delphi at this hour when the landscape is in deep shadow. Most observable is the thickness and redundance of the

vegetation here, the mingling of grey granite and green maquis. But what could make M. Valery (vol. I, p. 200) write that Olmeto, a village clustered away among rock and woods half way up a mountain, reminded him of Nice, a place of boulevards and promenades at the edge of the sea?"

To-day the roadside in places was blue with borage; an exquisite little azure pimpernel grew by its vermilion congener; and the weird grey Barbary fig waved its tortured arms heavenwards. On the return journey we stopped at Propriano to buy some *essence*, i.e., petrol. Beside the road, chewing a crust, was a girl with the flamingest red hair I ever saw; it was beautifully *soignée*, and looked like a look-back to Erin amid the host of dark-browed damsels. And so we got back to Sartène and I did a sketch of the town as seen from the valley below —perched aloft amongst its granite crags, with the broom everywhere lighting up the grey olives and the maquis.

In the town we explored the old city, entered by an arch out of the place which at first sight looks like an ordinary door. It is an extraordinary rabbit-warren of narrow streets, not more than eight feet broad, connected overhead by bridges and approached by steep granite steps and wooden ladders. It smelt not of Araby; frowsy women lounged about, a pert hussy stared hard and said "Good evening." And so back to dinner of excellent vegetable soup, omelette *aux fines herbes*, veal and peas, beefsteak and chip potatoes, salad and Roquefort, preserved peaches, walnuts, figs and cognac.

April 16th, Thursday. Left Sartène for Bonifacio.

Sartène is, without doubt, the modern city of Bubastis. This morning at 5 a.m. I was awakened by a most unearthly and terrific din. At first, half asleep, I fancied I was back in a Moslem land, and that, at the bidding of the muezzin, the faithful, in their thousands, were

invoking Allah. But no, the sun had not yet tinged the east, and gradually I realised that the voices were not those of men, but of cats. Such a screaming, such a yelling and yowling, I never before heard, nor ever wish to hear again, this side of Gehenna.

It is sad, this parting from the refined and kindly Madame Brocas, a lady in every sense of the word, who has made us so comfortable with first-rate food and clean rooms and beds. And a word must be said for Étoile, the dumpy, deaf but smiling little Corsican waitress, who gives a knife if you ask for a fork, and *vice versa*, and who retorts on your impatience that she can't understand your bad French. But as she can't understand Geoffrey's either, and he is a Frenchman, that reply cuts no ice, as the Americans say.

A word must be said on behalf of the first-rate white wine produced in this neighbourhood. I drank that of M. Cervaffriccio, and it is excellent—soft, mellow and full of body.

After *petit déjeuner* I took a stroll in the town, and posted a letter to E. The mystery of the feline concert of a few hours before was now solved. It is the pleasing habit of householders to deposit their domestic refuse in boxes in the gutter; but whether human scavengers have anything to do with its removal is more than doubtful. Long queues of grimalkins waited on the satisfaction of their canine foes, who growled and wrestled over such digestible morsels as sardine tins and ashes. Fluttering and squeaking around were multitudinous fowls picking up the unconsidered trifles, and I asked myself if the imminent omelette would be either harmless or necessary.

Turning up the hill above the town I presently came on a charming little house embowered with wistaria just breaking into flower; and in a little pleasaunce stood two plants in pots ablaze with rosy flowers, which at a

distance I mistook for rhododendrons. They were a double-flowered tree stock, with thick stems a foot long; and as decorative subjects as I have ever seen. In the same little garden grew climbing geranium, roses and periwinkle and deep blue iris; and Madame, robust and handsome, listened smiling to my praises of her *giroflets* and *glycine*. Growing on the abattised terraces I noticed peas (a very large-leaved variety), beans, potatoes and barley; cherries, pears, plums and peaches dotted the little clearings with cascades of colour, set in the foil of the dark hills beyond.

These Corsicans are most polite fellows; they touch their hat to you and give you the time of day. The sky looked very black, and I asked some stone-breakers if it was going to rain. They laughed and said "not likely." But ten minutes later it came down in earnest, just as I came upon a lowing cow, standing guard over twin calves. The yellow little beasts were in the middle of the road and were evidently just born, and totally unable to move. The grand brown mother looked uncommonly nasty, and the precipices on that ten-foot road are deep. So I retreated in good order, repeating to myself that I had two excellent reasons for so doing; the first that I didn't want to get soaked, and the second that, boy scout-like, it was my duty to hasten back to the village and inform the inhabitants of the awkward predicament of their animals.

The road from Sartène to Bonifacio is characterised by its extreme desolation and wildness rather than by any of the imposing grandeur that the traveller comes to associate with Corsican scenery. As a Scot, I regret to record that what in Argyllshire would be greeted with acclamation must here be regarded as comparatively trivial. Immense rocks lie about the path, not a soul is abroad, only a lark climbing to the blue breaks the grim silence of those moors. Soon Roccapina and the sea are

reached. A serrated line of rock looms up steeply over the Mediterranean, its eastern flank representing a lion couchant with eerie fidelity. And so the smooth, level road, actually straight for half a mile in some places, rushes on past brookside pastures, here covered with acres of purple campanula flanked by swathe upon swathe of buttercups.

Monaccia, about the only small town we passed, nestling high up on a distant hill, is the beginning of the calcareous formation which gives Bonifacio its distinctive whitey-buff colour. This rock is so friable that it can easily be detached with a stick, and it is marvellous that it has withstood the onslaughts of the sea.

Bonifacio might roughly be described as an immense yellow fort entirely covering a narrow peninsula. On the right you pass the port, a comparatively modern suburb, where a gaily-painted barque is loading cork. Up the hill you wind and see in front of you a tremendous forbidding ochreous wall, entered by a drawbridge, and you are in Bonifacio. The southern end of the peninsula is covered with barracks and parade grounds. A gale was blowing; I recovered my only hat a second before it flew into the sea; a soldier carrying a load perforce had to watch his *képi* disappearing down a side street.

The old part of the town is exceedingly picturesque; the streets are narrow to a degree, and in many places the adjacent houses are connected by flying buttresses. We saw a curious sight. Beneath the house was a dark hole, rather bigger than a London coal-shoot, and down this a small donkey, persuaded by his master, took a header and vanished into Erebus.

It was too rough to visit the famous grotto of Sdragonato, so we partook of some good coffee in a dirty café, where officers of the garrison played backgammon with portly burghers, and strolled back to our hotel —a little country place backed by a cliff surmounted

by the inevitable wall. Dotted about the yellow cliffs were gorgeous clumps of puce stock fringed by grey *artemisia*. Our hotel boasts one beauty at least. We were received by a girl, demure-eyed and Greuze-like, with the most beautiful red silky hair I ever saw.

Bonifacio.

From the Semaphore the panorama is magnificent. To the south lie all the small French islands—Larezzi, Perduto and Cavallo; the larger Italian island of Maddalena, strongly fortified; and behind them the higher hills of Sardinia, while along the Sardinian shore the white houses of Longo-Sardo stand out clearly across the blue waters of the Straits, which are rarely calm, and where the winds blow almost continuously. It was in these troubled waters that Cardinal Newman wrote his famous hymn, "Lead, kindly Light."

The Iles di Larezzi were the scene of the terrible wreck of the *Semillante*, which perished in full daylight on the rocky shore during a fearful storm. The frigate was on her way to the Crimea with 773 men on board, not one of whom was saved. For weeks after the disaster the bodies were washed ashore. They lie buried in a small cemetery on the island where they perished. A small piece of wood—all that was ever found of the ill-fated ship—is in the museum of the Arsenal at Toulon.*

The only way of visiting the grottoes is by sea. One can hire a boat at the port and row down the long harbour, along the sides of which are hundreds of tiny oysters on the rocks, and in some places quantities of enormous lobster pots waiting for their victims, which are shipped alive to the Continent in great numbers. The first of the grottoes, "le Camère," is just round the point of

* "The Scented Isle," p. 77.

the Madonetta. In one or two, larger than the others, there is room to land on the rocks. The "Bath of Venus" is particularly beautiful in colouring, with the jade-green water and lichen-covered rocks. A sunny day is best for visiting the grottoes, as the colours are more brilliant then. A little farther in is the "Sdragonato," the prettiest of all. The boat passes under a huge overhanging cliff which forms an archway. It is difficult to describe the interior to do it justice. One looks down through the clearest of water at a carpet of mosaic; rose, yellow and mauve lichens cover the rocky floor in indescribable beauty, shining like jewels through the limpid water. The opening of the roof is, curiously enough, the exact shape of Corsica.*

April 17th, Friday. To-day, at *Café Complet*, I ventured to ask our red-haired beauty her name. It is Ernestine. I went a step further and demanded her age. To my great astonishment she replied "sixteen." In England she would have been twenty-two.

Talking of walls, the Corsicans cannot justly be accused of an excess of zeal for hard labour, but the number of walls and totally useless walls you see scattered over hillsides and elsewhere brings you to the conclusion that when a party of natives are thoroughly bored with inaction (and this they must frequently be) they arise and with one voice exclaim: "Come, brothers, we will build a wall." Probably Balbus emigrated to Corsica.

One of the features of Bonifacio is the number of gigantic men bestriding the smallest of donkeys; others are its rampagious wind, its clouds of chalky dust and its blinding glare.

After sketching we drove to the Gulf of Manza, where the lapis lazuli of the deeper sea is striated with viridian towards the shore, past curious round conical-roofed buildings that encircle wells. Walking home I found

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 80, 81.

three orchids—a yellow cypripedium, a bee orchis and a handsome crimson and white fellow. *Anemone blanda* has given way to a mauve relation, by no means so attractive.

The dappled lizards sunned themselves on the rocks, but there was singularly little bird life. Even the ubiquitous blackbird, shot in his millions for export, failed to oblige with a song. Perhaps the gentle Bonifacian has exterminated him.

Our dining room (and I mustn't forget that we had fresh asparagus, the big sort, last night and are going to have it again to-night; jolly good it is too) is decorated gastronomically. There are three oleographs depicting respectively strawberries, pears, nectarines and grapes; peaches and grapes, an open box of cigars, a bottle of Benedictine, a coffee pot, a coffee cup, half full, with the spoon stuck upright in it; and a fallen bowl of peaches with black and white grapes and green figs.

As a corrective, or awful warning against undue indulgence in the pleasures of the table, on the sideboard there stands a fearsome gilt statue, three feet high, of the great Napoleon, wearing the greatest tummy that ever sculptor sculpted.

April 18*th*, *Saturday*. After a cold bath at 6 a.m. (how virtuous one feels gasping and grunting in the dawn!) we set off in Renault for Zonza, cheered on our way by the smiling godsend of that thoroughbred chestnut filly, Ernestine.

The way led through a desolate Tartarean landscape, reminiscent of Salvator Rosa, where dark rocks jagged the sky, and sparse maquis failed to cover the nakedness of the mountain side.

Chiodasino, a charcoal-burning station, full of mules and little else, was passed; and the straight road ran on to the swampy, eucalyptus-planted environs of Porto Vecchio—the old port.

This latter looks like a town newly built of cyclopean masonry and is the centre of a large cork industry. The port is situate at the end of a winding bay; and all about grow the forests where, amid the grass, broom and buttercups fleck the dark vandyke brown of the pillaged boles.

No scene can excel the wild glories of the panorama unfolded as the road climbs three thousand feet in twenty torturous miles from Porto Vecchio to Ospedale. Far below towards the east lies the winding bay, locked in the circumambient arms of its dark peninsulas; towards the south chain upon chain of hills advance menacingly upon the fleeting horizon; in front, towards the north, the onrushing tide of verdure surges upwards to the peaks below which bright solitary pines dot the pale madder rocks. The crass Boeotian air of the plains no longer ties to earth our spark of the divine; * the rare air strikes buoyant on the lungs; the soul is attuned to the spirit of the mountains, and would fain pierce with them the secrets of the empyrean.

Ospedale (which got its name from the Knights Hospitallers) is a tiny village perched on the very coaming of the mountain, curiously like its fellows of Kulu or Baltistan, with its long low houses apparently devoid of window or door. It possesses a sundial carved out of granite, and a *Café et Hôtel*, kept by M. Poli, who in his manner, no doubt, as in his name, resembles all other Corsican innkeepers. From Ospedale the descent begins, first through the great pine forest of the name and then through that of Barella. Most of the largest trees have been felled, and many lie where they fell; I saw several over three feet in diameter. We found several sawmills where the planks lay neatly ranged for transport.

As usual, fire has played havoc with these beautiful

* "Arque affigit humo divinae particulum aurae."—HORACE.

trees; and whole tracts have been seared and turned to skeletons. The vivid forest all around enhances the deathliness of the dead.

I forgot to say that on our unforgettable splendid drive up to Ospedale we nearly had a serious mishap. Two of the large char-à-bancs, owned by the Compagnie Française d'Excursions en Corse, were coming down the hill to meet us; and as these magnificent mountain roads are seldom more than ten feet broad, with a wall of rock on one side and a precipice on the other, it may easily be understood that two cars meeting have to watch their steps. Mr. Geoffrey was watching his opponent's near wheels very carefully when, lo and behold, our front off wheel disappeared into a hole and nearly upset the whole apple cart. It was a masonry water hole, a culvert, in fact, and there was none other, I am prepared to swear, on the whole face of that mountain. It was like our luck to locate it just as we were passing a char-à-banc.

Well, out we all got, and the spruce driver of the char-à-banc took very efficient command. He told off a fatigue party from his own 'bus, and when he said "lift," we lifted, and when he said "reculez" we reculezed; and after considerable efforts (I speak for myself only) we managed to back Master Renault out of the *cul-de-sac* into which he had so inconsiderately plunged. If the hole had been six inches wider we should have broken our front axle, and then where should we be now? But such trivial problems are hardly worth mooting.

After too short a glimpse of some stupendous rocks, the long snow-clad *arête* of Incudine swam into our ken; and soon afterwards the great valley of Bavella, backed by its quadruple mountain bastions, lay before us, and we were in Zonza, and alighting at the *Hôtel de Tourisme*, honourably distinguished amongst Corsican

hotels by its possession of an almost European latrine, within the house!—marvel of marvels.

I may be permitted, I trust, to add that the subject of latrines in Corsica is not one to be taken lightly. "Potatoes and matrimony," said the Irishman, "are the only two things in the world that one must not jest about." I would venture to add Corsican latrines to the list. At Zicavo, built on the steep flank of a mountain, our inn was, as I think I have noted, approached by a drawbridge; and below it a gerrymandered erection of matchboarding balanced uneasily over a convenient precipice. I, being unable to stand upright within, lurched heavily against one wall; with a portentous crack it broke from its moorings and fell sheer into the ravine. Blanched with terror I fled into the house.

After a very good lunch of ham, lamb, peas, sausage, omelette and cheese, Geoffrey and I took the rods and went down the hill to try for trout in the local stream. The pools were clear as crystal, and huge trout lolled about the bottom. But catch them we could not, though Geoffrey said he'd had two rises.

Crossing the granite boulders was ticklish work; and at last I had to take off my shoes and grovel ignominiously from ledge to ledge. As it was, I as near as nothing fell into the river. But then, a man with no toes should not go rock-scrambling. Coming back we met two engaging old gentlemen, natives of the country, one of them armed with a pin-fire matchlock; he said there were dozens of moufflon about, and wished he had as many louis d'or as he'd shot moufflon. We offered the other old chap a lift, but he said he'd got a donkey somewhere in front; it might be a few kilometres ahead by now; he would push on and catch it and save us stopping the car again. Of a surety these Corsicans have a very fine sense of politeness. And so back to Tourisme, where nightingales sang deliciously in the

great chestnut grove beneath my window. The near hindleg of my easy chair is broken off at the hock; but fancy having an easy chair at all!

Beneath my window is a midden, so that I am enabled, without impropriety, to jettison all sorts of rubbish. To my mind the greatest of all pleasures is the getting rid of superfluities.

April 19th, Sunday. Drove to Levie and ordered lunch off a surly-looking landlady, who apparently resented having her Sabbath peace disturbed. The village full of people, about to go to church, amongst them the curé. The bells of these parts seem to have a mellower tone than those of most English churches.

I was making a sketch of Levie (not the Biblical personage) and H. and Geoffrey had scattered amid the maquis in search of new flowers, when I heard the sound of a falling body. Presently Geoffrey came down to me in the road, his face streaming with blood.

"Good heavens, man!" I cried, "what's happened?"

"I was in the maquis," replied Geoffrey quite coolly, "and was in the act of picking a flower when my fingers touched a large viper. It rose and was about to strike, when I threw myself violently to one side, and, as you see, landed on my face in some brambles. Still, that is better than being bitten by a viper."

So, for the remainder of the forenoon, the heroic Geoffrey drove about Corsica with a bloody map of the island illustrating his physiognomy. We came to St. Andrea—a pretty village clinging to a long wooded slope beneath a steep pink mountain; and a perfectly hideous old man, with no eyes to speak of, came up with a bunch of brown wallflower and rosemary, and when I offered him a franc he politely but firmly declined it. "Il n'y a pas de quoi." Certainly the Corsicans are not a money-grubbing race.

Lunch was served by a dainty black pigtailed, slim-

legged damsel of fifteen called Pauline; so out of my four young waitresses, the names of three end in "ine"; Angeline, Ernestine and Pauline. Peradventure I shall encounter a giantess styled Incudine.

At Levie, many years ago, a young man, after quarrelling with his fiancée, threw her alive into the village *arca* (common tomb). The following day, attracted by her cries, a passer-by went to her assistance. He found the gay and pretty girl of yesterday a mad woman with snow-white hair.*

In the afternoon we enlisted a native youth of unprepossessing aspect in the cause of *la pêche*, and since we could not catch any trout with flies, we determined to have recourse to the vulgar worm, and despatched young Zonza to dig in his paternal kailyard. So Geoffrey fished and I fished, and the youth fished; but divil a trout did any one of us catch, though Zonza stuck it out so gallantly in some far distant pool that I began to fear he had vamoosed with that fifteen-guinea Hardy. I had already spoiled the child with two francs for worms, and I really couldn't spare the rod. Geoffrey sounded his tin trumpet at least five hundred and fifty times before young Zonza reluctantly returned, discomforting Geoffrey by casually remarking that the fine weather had evidently tempted abroad an unusual number of motorists.

But now the dread shears, in the guise of the plain attractive waitress with the *cendré* hair, has intervened to snip the thread of my narrative; for the exigencies of the *salle à manger* demand every chair. To-day is Primrose day, but alas! the primroses are left below on the road to Bonifacio; they do not like these two thousand feet heights. And to-day we heard the cuckoo for the first time.

April 20th, Monday. One of the most wonderful of

* "The Scented Isle," p. 221.

days, never to be forgotten, spent in seeing what must surely be some of the finest and most impressive mountain scenery in the world—the aiguilles and col of Bavella. For eight or nine miles the road, perched on the edge of a terrific gorge, climbs up to the pass, while the eye roams over the vast undulations far below. At nearly five thousand feet the aiguilles come into sight, sheer pointed granite cliffs a thousand feet above the road, like a collection of Cleopatra's needles, and falling sheer fully three thousand feet into a ravine. But at the summit of the pass the gorge was hidden in a vast swirling billowy snowy mass of vapour; only the higher peaks emerged; the mountains were islanded in a sea of cloud. It was almost impossible not to believe that one was gazing at an ocean foaming round rocky shores.

The great forest stretched away endlessly, and there were some exceedingly curious windswept trees on the pass, with boles about four feet high and eighteen inches in diameter and wearing the merest Newgate fringe of contorted foliage.

Beneath wonderful pines, some quite a hundred feet high, thousands of lilac crocuses covered the grass. Smaller and flatter than those at home, with orange pistils and brilliant flame-red anthers, the striped leaves are extraordinarily narrow, looking like tiny longswords hilted in the soil. The reverse of the flower is beautiful. The three upper petals are almost white, with three maroon stripes converging at the apex, and pinnate shading of the same colour from the stripes outwards. These stripes and shading shine through the petal, which on the obverse appears lilac like the three upper petals, lilac both on the obverse and the reverse. I dug up about forty in clumps of lovely humus, and shall have a good try at growing them at home. Blue violets, sweet scented, unlike our native *canina*, were everywhere, and tufts of a narcissus not yet in flower. We picknicked

by the roaring torrent at the bottom of the gorge, under a white heath at least twelve feet high, lolling on rugs, and H. discoursed of the habits of the Romans, dining lying down, crowned with seasonal garlands. He suggested that a wag might have put a sprig of hellebore into the crown of some hellish bore, as a slight reminder that he would do well to betake himself to the local Hanwell. What an edifying spectacle was an Emperor tearing with his fingers a red mullet bone from bone, or a party of gents who had individually consumed four skins of Falernian, with togas stained and crowns awry, rattling the dice-boxes with palsied hands.

On the return journey Geoffrey nearly terminated our careers. He was, as usual, driving on the wrong side of the road, with a fearful turn in front, and I saw a motor coming down, close on us. I shouted to the fool: "A car is coming," and all he did was to turn his idiotic head towards me. I gave us all up as lost. The oncoming car was almost on top of us when Geoffrey gave his hands a wrench, and by the mercy of God we neither went over the side or into the car. But it was too devilish a close thing to be pleasant.

Farther up I saw one of those cocoon-like nests woven into the leaves of pines which have defied me for so long. This one was getatable, though up a stiffish bank. I stopped the car and told Geoffrey to get it, and asked him if he knew what it was. "Oh, yes; the wind does that!" the imbecile replied.

The covering of the whitish flask-like nest was so tough that I could hardly prise it open with my metal shooting-stick. H. opined that it might contain hornets, or at the very least wasps; and found an object of interest many yards away. It actually contained a large hairy caterpillar and thousands of eggs. And that was "the wind" of the learned and scientific M. Geoffrey.

Bombyx processionis.

The life history of this processional caterpillar still appears to be wrapt in a certain mystery, and several writers have fallen into error about its habits. Their silver cocoons are so tightly woven to the pine branches that incredible force is necessary (as I know from experience) to detach them, and once formed only the long agency of time can destroy them.

Yet Miss Archer (p. 59 of "The Scented Isle") writes: "These large bags contain hundreds of caterpillars, and after a certain time fall to the ground."

Lear (p. 138 of "Journal of a Landscape Painter in Corsica") explains, no doubt accurately, the secret of their wanderings: "Though I have continually discovered them coming down the trunk of a pine tree, I have never seen them going up. Rather is not all this movement preliminary to burrowing in the earth (as, indeed, the peasants about say they do) previous to their transformation into chrysalis?"

The same writer quotes the two following letters from *Land and Water*:—

"Sir,—The pine procession caterpillar (*Bombyx processionis*) is almost as much to be dreaded as the scorpion of the south. It lives in large colonies under a common web in the early stage. When they are full fed, however, they sally forth in procession, one following the other in military order, and woe betide the unlucky man who breaks their ranks. Mr. Jeston, British Chaplain at Kissingen, told me that he was once attacked by a colony of these insects, from incautiously touching one of their number. He immediately felt a severe pain in his arm, and was dangerously ill for some days, and after the lapse of eight years continued to feel occasional pain and inflammation in the part over which the insects had crowded. It is not likely that they had a malicious intent, but that

their sharp hairs, being broken off by friction, entered the skin and occasioned this violent irritation. This is in accordance with the common theory, but some spirits of wine in which a number of these caterpillars had been preserved having a most irritating effect on the skin, I think it must have some poisonous secretion. Feb. 8, 1868."

"Sir,—I send for exhibition in the office a dozen specimens of the caterpillar of *Bombyx processionis*, preserved in spirits. The interesting account of the insect by Mr. Groom-Napier seems to me to be perfectly accurate except that I think he has been led by his reverend informant a little to over-estimate the dangerous qualities of the insect. I have known of two authentic instances of actual injury. In one case a caterpillar falling from a tree upon the neck of a lady caused considerable irritation for the moment, and afterwards raised blisters. Red marks, with a sensation of heat in the part touched, lasted for several days. In the other case, an English gentleman not long resident in this country, a zealous but not a very well-informed entomologist, took up a handful of the caterpillar for inspection, and felt the effects for a week afterwards in a burning sensation in the skin of his hands. The greatest harm they do is to the very extensive pine forests in this part of Portugal. It is not too much to say that every hundredth tree—in some places a much greater proportion—contains on its topmost shoot the web, accurately described by Mr. Groom-Napier, in which the caterpillar protects itself while in the pupa stage from birds, or perhaps from wind, rain and scorching sun heat. The trees selected are generally young ones, and much stunting of growth and curvature of trunk arise from the eating out of the crown of the tree by the hungry broods of caterpillars. I have not been long enough in this country to give much information upon the habits of the insect. I have never seen it either in the developed or in the nympha

state, but I have no doubt that the great bunches of pine leaves which I very frequently observe high up in the trees, and which, when I examined some last autumn, contained remnants of the dried skins of the caterpillars, are the untenanted gregariously-formed cocoons of the *Bombyx processionis*. Mr. Groom-Napier is quite correct in supposing that this poisonous insect has no 'malicious intent.' It stings when it is handled; not unless. It is even, I think, more torpid than most other caterpillars. The processions are very curious, and as I do not remember to have seen them described, it may interest your readers to hear something about them. A day or two ago, while shooting in the pine woods, I came upon a procession of thirty-five of these caterpillars, slowly moving in a sinuous and snake-like course, and in strict Indian file, the head of each close to the tail of its preceder, so close, indeed, as to make me think they were in actual contact till I touched one to see. I then moved one caterpillar gently out of his place in the line and watched the result. The whole procession stood still, and while I waited—about five minutes—the straggler had not taken his place in the line, nor had the procession resumed its march. This telegraphing both to the van and to the rear of some disturbance in the line of march strikes me as very singular. An accident or disturbance of this sort would seem to disorganise the whole band. I once found a procession of about thirty caterpillars in a line, the first three or four of which had been trodden upon and killed, and though this must have happened some hours before, for their bodies were dried up by the sun, the others had not stirred from the spot, the line still being perfectly preserved. I am quite disposed to agree with your correspondent that the irritating effect on the skin does not arise merely from the wounds caused by the numerous needle-like hairs of the caterpillars, but that it resides in some poisonous excretion which these hairs con-

vey with them into the wounds they make. Did the irritation only result from the penetration of the hairs, we should expect it to be no greater than what is caused by handling some species of aloe, or by touching the hairy skin of a prickly pear. In either case, the irritation is a mere trifle compared with the inflammation set up by the contact of *Bombyx processionis*. So convinced am I of the presence, on or in the caterpillar itself, of some acrid principle, capable of raising blisters on the skin, that it has more than once occurred to me, looking to the great abundance of the insects in this country, whether it might not be possible to substitute the dried and powdered bodies of this caterpillar for the commonly used *Cantharis vesicatoria*, whose tendency to produce strangury and other derangements is so great an objection to its employment in medicine. I should be glad to send the insects to anyone desirous of experimenting, but I would rather not be the 'corpus vile' on whom to make those experiments. I have noticed these insects, or their allied species, in Italy and, I think, in Greece and Turkey; but I believe, subject to correction from better entomologists than myself, that *Bombyx processionis* is not a native of Great Britain. I cannot find the insect described in Messrs. Westwood and Humphrey's great work, and I hope this destructive species may never find its way to our country. Exsul (Oporto), March 1868."

I walked the last three miles of the way home amid the great pillars of that vast green-domed cathedral, and the sense of silence and of peace was as refreshing as the aromatic air. Then I came on a party of woodmen barking trees with axes. Into the soft wood they drive metal trays, into which the resin oozes. This is the stuff beloved of fiddlers. Coats and waistcoats were guarded by a truculent dog, and I had great difficulty to pass him intact. At the hotel a huge brindled cat of ferocious mien slept in the sun. "Yes," said the landlord, "he was

once a wild cat; but now, as you see, he is totally domesticated." Domesticated or not, I determined to let that sleeping cat lie.

April 21, *Tuesday*. Was distinguished by so many ineptitudes on the part of the egregious Geoffrey that the plan of campaign was changed, and it was decided to return to Ajaccio and to hire another car. How many times, by the purest good luck, we have escaped death, I am unable to compute; but it is no good to go on tempting Providence; the vessel goes once too often to the well. On this particular day the road led over the highest altitudes we had as yet crossed—a yellow hair-pin ribbon along the flanks of colossal hills, by Aullène and the Col de la Vacchia to Zicavo. Geoffrey's method is to go comparatively reasonably until he sees a blind and horrific turn, when he at once lets his engine all out and flies, on the wrong side of the road, and his near wheels overhanging a thousand feet precipice, as though entered for an international trophy at Brooklands.

At one turn he almost ran into a motor-lorry; and then, when the driver drew on to the precipice edge and gave the fatuous Geoffrey heaps of room to pass, he waved his hands and declared it impossible, until my bellowings behind forced him on, to find that it was perfectly practicable. Even then, proved wrong, he waved protesting hands that ought to have been on the wheel. In short, Geoffrey is a fool, and a rash fool to boot. *Gegen Dummheit fechten gôtter selbst vergeben*, says the wise German proverb. (Against stupidity the gods themselves fight in vain.)

Some of these villages, grey against the grey olives, red-roofed and fortress-like, are built on the most astonishingly inaccessible peaks, surrounded by barren rocks, so that it puzzles the stranger to know how their inhabitants live. A few goats, a few fowls, a few pigs; but no cultivated ground, no corn, hardly a vegetable. From the

Col de la Vacchia there is a gigantic panorama embracing the valley of the Taravo, and the grassy, stony slopes about the pass recall some Yorkshire dale.

Hereabouts the road grew quite Christmassy; we found dwarf holly clinging to the rocks, and a dozen bunches of mistletoe hung from a tall chestnut. At Zicavo, where we lunched, we were warmly welcomed by the minute but shapely Angèle, who shook us by the hand and furnished forth the board with delicious trout.

A small deathshead of a man, with wife and daughter, sucked his teeth loudly between courses, and three cats and a huge yellow dog competed for the piscine offal. Thence we ran down easy slopes, where goldfinches were numerous, into the eucalyptus-planted suburbs of Ajaccio; and drove between the tall houses to the Continental, where again we were refused admittance, but this time provided with excellent rooms at the Villa Palmyra across the way.

April 22, *Wednesday*. Our quarters are quite palatial, with marble fireplaces and panels picked out with gold; and French windows opening on to a spacious balcony above a sub-tropical garden. Here *aubépine* (spiræa), which the careless southerners confuse with hawthorn, just as they call stocks and gilly flowers alike *giroflées*, is wreathed with snowy bloom; the scented pomegranate pushes through the pilasters; a great palm droops its fronds beyond; roses abound; heliotrope scents the air; a gorgeous wistaria dapples the darkness of a weeping cedar.

As we were breakfasting on the balcony an extraordinary collection of medieval-looking soldiers swarmed from nowhere into the garden. They wore high jack boots and spurs, white breeches, brown jerkins, wigs with black bows, brass helmets surmounted by long black horse-hair plumes and terrific curved swords. I rubbed my eyes, and thought I'd gone gaga. And these gentry,

if you please, were Napoleonic soldiers, about to mount and ride off into the plains to be filmed by the firm of Gancy, which is spending two million pounds on the illustration of Napoleon's life.

Ajaccio is Napoleon. Here the great man was born; within sight of its shores he was exiled; here, as the tablet in the Cathedral tells us, he, dying at St. Helena, asked to be buried. Napoleon seems to have absorbed into his being all the spirit of all the genius of his compatriots, so that since his day they have had no man of outstanding mark.

The Napoleonic home fills a whole block between two narrow streets, and is much larger than it would appear from without. It has had a curious history since the Bonapartes became Napoleon; for though it has remained in the possession of the family it has not been lived in; and there, untouched except by the hand of time, are the very bits of furniture that the great man used as a boy; the very decorations and improvements he had made when a General in Egypt. There is the self-same sedan chair which was hurriedly sent to the Cathedral where Madame Mère was worshipping when the pains came on her; there is the dull blue couch on which Napoleon was born. There is a charming little toy—a queen's doll's house—given by Napoleon to his mother on his return from Marengo; a little wooden house with carved ivory figures of the Child and Mary and Joseph, and a couple of cows ruminating in the background. One room, the salon, is quite a large one, and strikes one by the excellence of its proportions. I measured it to be 54 ft. by 21 ft. Napoleon knocked several small rooms into one to make this salon; and his striped blue paper and gilt mirror still hang on the walls.

The furniture is of the type now known as *Directoire*; Madame Mère's sitting-room has a lot of chairs covered with a brocade of dull gold with a purple design; all the

rooms, except the salon, are small and low to our modern eyes. Napoleon, as a boy and lieutenant of artillery, had two rooms at the very end of the house, overlooking the street that backs the front door; and there is still the trap-door in the floor of his bedroom by which he escaped from his foes and made his way to Toulon.

His grotto is a ramshackle collection of huge dolmens piled up on the maquis-covered slope to the north of the town. The way up to this curious place is bright with many coloured flowers; immense racemes of purple mesembryanthemum, like giant sea-anemones, hang over the granite boulders; the white cistus merges in a golden flood of broom.

Here, in the dingy gloom of the narrow cave, Napoleon is said to have read Tasso and made love to Giacominetta: a ribald Ajaccian schoolboy ditty containing the lines:—

> "Napoleon, socks down at heel,
> Makes poor Giacominetta squeal."

There is a beautiful view hence, over the red roofs of villas embowered in greenery to the ultramarine of the bay, where lies a hideous sight Napoleon was spared, a modern ironclad. After a visit to a gentleman called Pozzo di Borgo, who controls a motor agency, with a view to replacing the peccant Geoffrey, we hired a car to drive us to the famous villa Pozzo di Borgo, built about 1890 by a distant kinsman of the motor-man, and head of one of the richest and most powerful families of Corsica, always inveterate foes of the parvenu Napoleon. It is a surprising palace of Bath stone, every single one of which was originally part of the Tuileries. When the latter was destroyed by the mob, the then Pozzo di Borgo got leave to take a part of the ruins, and so by rail to Marseilles and by sea to Ajaccio they came, and were laboriously transported up a 3000 ft. mountain and re-erected on the verge in the exact image of their former incarnation, over-

looking one of the grandest panoramas of mountain and sea the mind can conceive. This trifling exploit cost the family 3,000,000 francs; nine years later the owner died, and the family have never lived there since, but the furniture and pictures remain and visitors are shown over by a Laodicean guardian who, replying to an enthusiastic Frenchman of our party, said: "De l'histoire je m'en fiche."

The furniture falls chiefly into two categories, 15th century Italian Renaissance, of which there was a splendid example in an old carved sideboard, and late 17th century, showing marked Italian influence. The chimney-pieces are said to be copied from some in Charles VIII's castle at Amboise. There is a fine collection of well-bound books, chiefly histories and travels, amongst which we noted Sir F. B. Head and Stanhope. There is a rather hard picture of Napoleon carrying a telescope, in white breeches and high boots, by David. The Ionic columns on the façade of the lower floor are exquisitely and minutely carved with flower and leaf designs; the upper columns are Corinthian. And so round the hair-pin turns (not at Geoffrey's customary Brooklands pace) to dinner at the over-rated Continental, where a huge coat-of-arms, *Napoleonis gloria*, faces a hideous mirror defaced, if possible, by a puerile painting of a singing woman; while scurrying, infrequent waiters cause the badly morticed floorboards to leap in such manner that it is only chance if your head does not get involved with the soup tureen.

April 23, *Thursday*. Left glary, stone-encumbered (3 ft. high continuous pile of metal blacked the principal street) Ajaccio behind, perhaps for ever, and faced north-west by Sagone to Cargèse. It was not long before Antoine Desanti, our new Jehu, a swarthy, hard-bitten, brown-eyed young fellow of twenty-eight, gave us a proof of his quality. A large car lay in front, raising impene-

trable clouds of dust, and Antoine opened his throttle and dashed off in pursuit. Very soon the car was overtaken; but no trumpetings of Antoine could induce the grey scallywag of a driver to give him room to pass. Antoine rose to the occasion. Snatching a pistol from his pocket he fired a shot across the enemy's stern. The effect was magical. Old greybeard darted so precipitately to his right side that he narrowly escaped destruction in a ditch; his large cargo of passengers crouched down in the last throes of terror, and we passed our foes and the dust-storm in truly Napoleonic fashion. Indeed, we felt that the days of bandits and bloodshed were not wholly gone; and that we had covered ourselves with a sort of reflected Dick Turpinish glory, as well as dust.

Presently we saw a wrecked motor-car some thirty yards below the road, not overturned, but hopelessly broken. "Oh, yes," said Antoine, "some fools, half drunk, went out with bad brakes and drove too fast, so down they went. No, nobody was killed; but they fled like birds through the maquis and their faces were most damnably disfigured."

All the way to Ponte Leccia the scenery might have been near Tintern on the Wye, varied by corries copied from many a Scottish moor. The mauve cistus bloomed here alongside the white, and H. had the profanity to ejaculate: "A cistus, O Lord, in all our doings."

At Ponte Leccia a sluggish stream merges in the sea beyond long spits of sand. Suddenly Antoine stopped his engine, and crying: "A heron, a heron!" ran round to the back of the car and snatched out a rifle of ancient make, into which he stuffed a cartridge and aimed at a bird at least 400 yards away. I was astonished at the accuracy both of the musket and of Antoine; the bullet struck the water six inches to the right of the heron, which sailed away on slow-flapping wings, laughing mockingly. Then we put a rod together and walked to

the stream over a field, dotted with the grey downy leaves of the great mullein; but Antoine failed to get a rise, and so I left the field to him. We encountered flock upon flock of newly-shorn sheep, black and white; but in Corsica the black sheep predominate.

All along this coast there is a great number of Martello towers—the originals of the blockhouses erected by Pitt to keep out Napoleon. Martello is somewhere in this island; and there Napoleon held out against his foes for a long time, subsisting on a single horse. *Sic vos non vobis denituistis aves.*

Cargèse is a most picturesque village by the blue sea, inhabited by Greeks or half-Greeks, and remarkable in Corsica for the industry and agricultural skill of its people. All the available land is cultivated, and crops of barley, potatoes, beans, onions and artichokes cover the abattised terraces. Ivy-leaved geranium, a mass of pink, drooped from the walls; the fishermen's boats dotted the bay; incredibly slow-moving oxen drew modern ploughs; some, *mirabile dictu*, in a circular course.

The Hôtel de France, to which we had telegraphed for rooms at 10 a.m., we reached at 5 p.m.; but the telegram arrived after we did. Outwardly the Hôtel de France is a small, mean hostelry; but the great soul of its proprietress, Madame Fieschi *née* Stephanopouli, informs it; and to dwell there is all unmixed delight. A magnificent buxom matron is Madame Fieschi, with buttocks at least 3 ft. across and a bosom of bovine capacity. Enormous coils of raven hair; sparkling black eyes, a kindly smile and indefatigable desire to please; such is our hostess, one of the salt of the earth. And her cooking and her coffee! She buys the latter green, at 16 fr. the kilo, roasts it, grinds it, and makes it herself in her beloved Lilliputian utensils; pointing to an ordinary English tin coffee-pot, she said: "Those things are no damned good," or words to that effect.

Nightingales were singing in the tiny, well-filled garden, and a tree mallow and a rose bush gave a touch of colour to the drab. A walk round the village before supper revealed two adjacent churches, the Greek and the Latin; and a war memorial with fully ninety names, out of a population of under 1100, bore witness to the sacrifices of its sons. But they come of Spartan stock, and they carry on the traditions of their forbears. A light blue slop-pail, scarcely masked by some thistles, three yards from the main road and its diaphanous bamboo fence, was surreptitiously installed for our convenience; the Spartans themselves scorn such effeminacies. Madame is a widow; her son was five years a prisoner of war; though she sent him parcels every week the German swine ate his food, and he nearly died of starvation. Raw barley and water were his staples. Three daughters she had; but one, a very pretty girl from her photograph, died in giving birth to little Dominique, a lusty youngster of five who runs about the house in a large straw hat and swings his small body over high railings in a sufficiently alarming manner.

Clothilde, another grandchild, familiarly known as Nini, is a pathetic-looking girl of ten, who waits on us at table, goes out and buys us wine and cigarettes, and generally behaves with a sedateness entirely foreign to the unceremonial genius of her grandmother.

" La mort casse tout, hélas ! " she said, when speaking of her lost daughter, and those were the only sad words I heard pass her red, smiling lips.

War Memorial—Greek Names.

The rector of the Uniate Greek Church at Cargèse has kindly given me the following list of Greek names on the War Memorial. The township lost sixty men in all. All names ending in -acci are of Greek origin.

Corizzi. Capodimacci.
Dragacci. Constantin.
Elie.
Exiga, Michel.
Frimigacci.
Garidacci.
Petrolacci.
Ragazzacci Dimes.
Nicholas.
Stephanopoli.
Voglinacci.

There are also two Pozzo di Borgo on it.

The Greek-speaking Confraternity of the Holy Spirit attached to the Greek Church numbers fifty members. The notices relating to it are put up in the church in Greek.

Uniate Greek Church.

The Uniate Greek Church at Cargèse is attached to the Congregation de Propaganda Fide at Rome, but is under the supervision of the Bishop of Ajaccio as its diocesan. The services are said in Greek. As is the case in other Uniate Greek churches, the communicant partakes of both the bread and wine. The bread is broken and dipped in the chalice and is then given to the communicant on a gold spoon.

The altar is like the High Altar in the Roman Catholic churches, but the chancel is separated from the nave of the church by a lofty screen pierced with two doors, on which holy pictures are painted, whilst pictures of saints with Greek inscriptions take the place of the usual Stations of the Cross.

There are in the chancel several ancient pictures, including one of the Byzantine School dating from the twelfth century, showing St. John Chrysostom with St. Basil on the left and St. Gregory on his right.

The sermons, I was told by Madame Fieschi, and not by the Rector, are preached in Italian.

The Uniate Greek Church is largely represented in the former Austro-Hungarian Empire and also in parts of Italy.

April 24, *Friday*. At 6 a.m. I am up and doing. H. tramps like a prisoner up and down his narrow cell alongside (what he does, or how he manages to dress on these occasions, boggles the imagination): the raucous croaking of the overnight frogs has ceased, but the nightingales still sing as rapturously as ever; the sun comes over the mountain-top, and another glorious day has dawned. Two fishermen come up the street carrying a basketful of fish; they are much the same size and shape as perch, without the dorsal fin, silvery, and are variously called "gros jeux" by Antoine, and "saumons" by Madame. There is a river at Monmouth and a river in Macedon; and there are salmon in both. What's in a name? I buy two kilos, one for Madame and the children, and one for ourselves for *déjeuner* at Porto; for which I have to pay the somewhat heavy price of ten francs.

Then we breakfast off bread and the best coffee in the world, bar none; and Madame goes off to awaken the still slumbering milkmaids: "Ah, les Folies Bergères," mutters H., as he gulps down the grateful fluid—black as night, hot as hell, and sweet as love. Thus we take leave of one of those families whom to know is an honour and a delight, as well as a liberal education.

The road leads upwards to Piana; the *tempo* is *andante sostenuto;* the mauve rock-rose mingles with the broom; we pass strings of deep-bosomed shepherdesses carrying baskets of *brouche* upon their heads. Brouche is the national *pièce de résistance*. It is a sort of cream cheese, very insipid and mawkish, made from the milk of sheep and goats by boiling the same and throwing the scum into baskets of grass to solidify in the open air.

Soon we come to the gigantic pinnacles, hundreds of feet sheer above the ravine, ochreous where the sunlight strikes, and deep purple in the shade, that are one of the marvels of this marvellous land.

*". . . The wonderful panorama of Piana and the Calenches. As far as colour goes there is nothing in Corsica—or few other countries for that matter—to surpass this view. I have heard people who have travelled all over the world say that the Calenches are unique.

" In the foreground lies Piana with its white houses, surrounded by green orchards and gardens, and behind rise the great rugged rocks of deep rose-red porphyry, jutting out into the bluest of blue seas. Behind them to the left rise the darker red points of Monte Sonius and the Pointe Scandola, and to the right a range of snow-covered peaks from which the Capo della Madia stands out sharply. Even in rainy weather the Calenches are a wonderful colour, and on a chilly evening, when the afterglow is still lingering on the higher peaks, blood-red against a sapphire sky, they make a picture that is not likely to be forgotten. They are also magnificent by moonlight, their weird shapes throwing still weirder shadows."

And then we walk down five miles into Porto, surely an epitome of all Corsica, with its azure bay and pink and green encircling hills, and flamboyantly vivid poplars and dark eucalyptus groves and rosy rocks; and above all the snowy summit of Avonato.

Whilst I was sketching the Piana rocks, a most extraordinary pair passed by. One man had a white thing over his head that looked like a woman's nightcap; his lean shanks were stockinged and knickerbockered. His companion, with ginger head bared to the sun, wore the dirtiest and tightest-fitting suit of white ducks I ever saw. At Porto they reappeared in a pair-horse victoria, accom-

* " The Scented Isle," pp. 136, 137.

panied by a posse of females as bizarre as themselves, who waved bathing towels and shouted in vile Americanese. Most of the younger females had omitted to button up their blouses, as though consciously and legitimately proud of their exuberant charms. At Porto the Corsican telegraph service again distinguished itself. At 8 a.m., we had wired for lunch; the telegram arrived after Antoine had arrived there about 11.30. Attended by several large dogs we lunched under a brown awning, and had *bouillie-à-baisse*, our own *gros jeux*, sausage, fried eggs, most excellent rabbit stew and the inevitable brouche.

(I have added a new word to the English tongue—To Zed. The kindly sign Z., Don du Dunlop, at the most ferocious veerings, has done it. Why zigzag, all zeds, when you can simply and easily "zed"?)

From Porto we climbed high into the mountains, and spent the night at Evisa.

* "The *route forestière* to Evisa ascends the valley on the left bank of the river, under the towering precipices of the Capo dei Signori. Formerly a powerful seigneur inhabited a castle at the foot of this mountain. He harassed the poor of the district and made their lives unbearable by his cruelty. But one day they rose against him and, armed with spades and scythes, invaded the castle, killing the wicked seigneur and all his men. The wife of the seigneur escaped, and, followed by her women, climbed from rock to rock, pursued by the infuriated peasants. Finally, unable to climb further, the wretched women, rather than fall into the hands of their enemies, flung themselves into the abyss."

And what a verminous night it was! All night it rained, and we awoke to find banks of rolling cloud and a Scotch mist—very bad weather for our prospected attack on the Col de Vergio, and thence to Corte. This

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 145, 146.

Col de Vergio has been a much-disputed topic for several days past. Most of the wiseacres declared it was blocked with snow, and quite impassable by motors; others laughed them to scorn. So we determined to go and see for ourselves; and for once the croakers were right.

At 8.30 we left, and left most thankfully the Hôtel Gigli—a rabbit-warren of gloomy cells opening one out of the other, infested with fleas and odours unspeakable. On one floor, W.C. was painted in huge black letters. On opening the door you found yourself in the kitchen, where a slipshod woman crouched over a small fire on the hearth, and a dirty child sprawled on the floor. But, though excessively nasty, the Hôtel Gigli was cheap; our bill for supper, wine, bed and breakfast amounted to 4s. 6d. a head.

As we mounted towards the Col, through the superb forest of Aitone, the fog and cold increased; the dim pines beaded with long wisps of green lichen, loomed ghostly; the beech scrub was brown and gold with the leaves of yesteryear; dead bracken reddened the granite screes; sombre holly filled the dells; and never a ray of sunshine lit up the inspissated gloom. When we got thoroughly chilled we got out of the car and walked, crossing a few patches of snow and ice, which Antoine had successfully negotiated. Presently another car dashed up the hill, and, after what seemed a very long tramp, we came on both cars, one behind the other, mournfully regarding a patch of snow about ten yards long and two feet deep.

A Corsican gentleman and his wife greeted us from their car, and we held a council of war. It was determined that the two chauffeurs should go on to the top of the pass and see what the snow was like on the downward slope, reputedly the worse blocked. If there was nothing worse ahead than our present obstacle, we would use all means to get through it, even to going back for shovels to the forester's house outside the village; but if there was, we

would turn back. So off dashed the two young men, and we four toiled painfully after them, smitten by driven icy rain. The chauffeurs reported that there was snow five feet deep on the road below the pass. That settled the matter; we backed the cars down till we came to a place where we could turn, and sorrowfully retreated whence we came.

There was nothing to do now but to retrace our steps to Porto, go north to Calvi, and from there descend on Corte by a less hyperborean route than that we had attempted.

It was raining cats and dogs as we got to Porto, with the yellow-green pullulating on its poplars, and its little merry torrent singing as it neared the sea. We lunched up stairs of a highly dangerous character; for they had no backs, and your feet had a tendency to get stuck, when a fall would have meant a broken leg. However, there were anchovies and kid, and a bottle of quite drinkable white wine. The road from Porto to Calvi is not particularly interesting; there is hardly a tree to be seen, and the characteristic grandeur of Corsican scenery is entirely absent.

Calvi, with its fortress-citadel perched above the sea, was reached in a regular gale of wind and rain, and we deferred exploring it till the morrow, contenting ourselves with hastily seeking the shelter of the Café Emmanueli, on the palm-fringed sea front, abode of fishermen, wherein a young fellow amused himself by making a fox-terrier walk on her hind legs to the lure of a lump of sugar, and a nasty ring-wormed little girl ventured unpleasantly near.

The Hôtel Christophe Colomb, where we put up, is a queer bare barrack of a place, and you felt the odd sensation of having received a life sentence as you entered your bedroom, with its naked red-tiled floor and white-washed walls. The noise in that place baffles description.

When I opened my shuttered windows the rain drove eight feet into the room; the shutters banged with incredible violence; the windows followed suit; above the din of thunder boomed and a succession of terrific crashes announced that all the doors in the house were proclaiming their resentment at the admission of fresh air. To crown everything, the screaming falsetto nasal voice of the proprietor, cursing and imploring, made up a concerto which H. had the bad taste to describe at dinner as typically Wagnerian.

Dinner provided another instrument to the orchestra, for Columbus threw the plates about with cymbalic effect.

April 26, *Sunday.* All night the storm raged, and at 6 a.m., though the rain had stopped and the sun was out, the wind still blew great guns. H.'s room was across a passage and, paying him an early morning call, I found him fugging with unopened windows. This I promptly remedied; getting a grand view of the citadel and the sea and the distant gleaming lighthouse. The fresh air smoked H. out of his frowsy den, and he went off to get some shaving water. I returned to my own room and presently heard the most horrific crash, followed by the sound of falling glass, even as though the Crystal Palace had been hit by a bomb. Rushing out, I saw that three large panes in H.'s windows had been smashed to atoms, and a fourth was badly fractured. Following, as thunder on lightning, though couched in a higher key, came the loud nasalities of the fat and furtive-eyed proprietor; he was abusing H. in no measured terms, and H. was returning Rolands for his Olivers in his best Montmartre argot. I confess I rolled about my room convulsed with inextinguishable laughter, although it was I who, by opening his window, had involved poor H. in this scandalous predicament. "I cannot buy glass nearer than Nice; it comes all the way by Bastia; there is no

vitrerie in this island; you must pay me forty francs!" yelled the excited Corsican.

"Bosh! What an extortion! Damned if I do! It's all the fault of your stinking windows!" retorted the exasperated H.

He returned anon, partly mollified by his argumentative triumph in knocking ten francs off the price of the new panes; and when, still shaking with misplaced joy, I offered to contribute fifteen francs towards the damage, I honestly believe that he was rather pleased than otherwise that the catastrophe had occurred.

After an excellent breakfast of bread, butter and sweet brown honey (September, as opposed to March, honey, Mr. Columbus told us, the March brand being bitter. So the Greeks were right about the Corsican honey, after all), we went out into the windy sunshine, past a war memorial representing a bronze woman with wind-blown skirts holding aloft a sword, in front of a white marble Corinthian portico up hundreds of steps to the ramparts, and enquired our way of a gentleman and his wife in difficulties with a mule and cart, to the house where Christopher Columbus was born.

The streets here are stepped, and the unfortunate mule had a good deal more than he could manage. The cart stuck at a step; Darby and Joan cursed and belaboured; but the mule emphatically refused to burst himself for them or anybody else. But help came in the shape of the lusty Antoine, well supported by the immense bulk of H., and backed up by such puny efforts as I could make. In the end, though not at first, we got that cart up the step, and Darby was so grateful that he commandeered a bare-legged urchin, *sous peine d'amende*, to conduct us whithersoever we should list. Thus we strolled on, through cobbled streets flanked by yellow masses of pyrethrum to a desolate corner of the citadel, where no man lived and no dog barked and houses fell in ruin; and there, on the

single remaining wall of a ruined house was a plaque with the inscription:

" Ville de Calvi.

Ici est né en 1441
Christophe Colomb
immortalisé par la découverture
du nouveau monde alors que Calvi
était sous la domination Génoise.
Mort à Valladolid le 20 Mai, 1500."

(In 1441 Henry VI. founded Eton: Floreat Etona! Floreat Columbus!)

Yes, Calvi has a good deal to be proud of; as you enter the citadel the motto of the town is written large above you: " Civitas Calvi, semper fidelis," the same as that of Worcester, and for much the same reason. With the trifling difference that, whereas Worcester was always loyal to the Stuarts, Calvi transferred her allegiance from the Genoese to the French, and considered herself equally loyal in so doing. Her allegiance, if temporary, was none the less splendid.

We must not forget that it was the galleys of Calvi, under Andrea Negroni, which led the van when the Venetian galliasses broke the Turkish line at Lepanto and saved a trembling Europe from Moslem slavery.

Then we passed on to see a monument to a man greater in the eyes of Britons than any haphazard swimmer on to lands beyond his ken. Three kilometres out of Calvi, 300 yards from the road, is a group of rocks, an admiral's cocked hat surmounting all, where Nelson, directing the fire of a battery, lost his eye. The climb from the road is stiffish, over boulders and through clinging cistus; but the effort is repaid when one reads the plaque affixed to the great rock, saying, with the simplicity that attends immortality: " Ici Nelson, dirigeant le feu

d'une batterie contre Calvi, perdit un œil. 12 Juillet, 1794."

Below you have it in Antoine's caligraphy; for the inscription was faint; the rock was slippery, and neither H. nor I can see quite as well as we used to:

"Syndicat d'initiative de Calvi.
Ici Nelson dirigeant le feu d'une batterie contre Calvi perdit un œil. 12 Juillet, 1794."

Here I recognised that there are three separate species of white cistus. The first is the large sort, greatly resembling that king of shrubs *Eucryphia pinnatifolia*; the second is a smaller plant, with flowers about the size of Michaelmas daisies, with its five petals widely distinct; the third is almost a creeping thing, with flowers larger than the second and very much like in habit a cinquepetalous *Dryas octopetala*.

After sketching the Citadel of Calvi we remounted good little Berliet and took the road to Belgodère, which owes its name (*beau plaisir*), as Hachette says, "to its delicious position above the valley of Regino."

Assuredly this drive is one of the most pleasing in Corsica. Here you find large villages, four in sight at one *coup d'œil*, dominating rocky fastnesses above a smiling plain rich with barley in ear, olive groves, grasslands, mulberry trees and fruitful terraces. From Muro the wide valley, surely the flattest plain in Corsica, sweeps down to the sea, and the traveller feels that he, like Dante, has been transported from purgatory to the terrestrial paradise. At Belgodère we sought the Hôtel des Étrangers, an edifice built on a natural slope of steep granite; you might have fancied yourself at Scawfell.

You had to find the second storey to find the hotel; we entered the ground floor and were politely repulsed by a young man sitting in a cavernous recess. A long passage, perpetually invaded by a marauding hen, which the land-

lady misused her time in shooing out, led into a dirty hole of a dining-room; and we had about as nasty a lunch as I ever remember consuming. But the view from the much be-curtained window compensated; the vivid young green; the opulent promise; the broad acres of wealth. For sheer pastoral beauty and comfortable well-being, the country between Calvi and Belgodère affords an extraordinary contrast to the greater part of this wild and barren island, glorious in its illimitable prospects, but stern and forbidding to those of its children who would fain suck sustenance from its arid breasts.

From Belgodère to Ponte Leccia the way lies through valleys that you might fancy you had seen before in Breconshire, except that always above them tower the perennial snows of the Monts d'Oro and Rotondo. We stopped at Ponte Leccia in order to fish in the Golo; all the afternoon Antoine and I flogged that recalcitrant river and never got a rise.

Our waitress, Louise, a Frenchwoman from Lens, told us her story at supper, where, alas, there were no trout.

Once she was well off; now she has to earn her bread in exile and slavery. Nine hundred civilians of her native town were killed before she left it; she was evacuated to Valenciennes; when she returned in 1918 she could not find the spot where her home had stood.

April 27, *Monday*. Last night, as I was trying to bring this diary to date, the white-haired old harridan of the hotel set upon me, fixing me with her leery, bleary eyes, pinching my arms to enforce her points, and pouring forth a stream of miserly rhetoric about the dearness of every conceivable thing purchasable—potatoes, coffee, wine, etc. etc. Nothing would induce her to go. She said she wanted to give her daughter a gold louis; her argument became syllogistic; "You are rich, therefore you are an American; the Americans have gold, therefore you have gold; give me a gold coin."

In vain I told her that I was neither rich nor an American. At last I packed up my papers and departed.

To-day the wind blows bitterly; snow falls; the central icy mountains of this small island can make the end of April feel like December in England. I watched a man planting potatoes to-day; at home they would be in by Easter Monday. The vineyards hereabouts are very well cultivated; a single mule draws a plough between the rows, leaving a furrow in the centre and a ridge up to the vines. Still suffering from the *cacoethes scratchendi*, I don't know which is the more elusive genus, the trout or the flea.

The superiority of Antoine's driving to that of the late ineffable Geoffrey I ascribe chiefly to the fact that Antoine's car is driven from the off side; Geoffrey's was driven from the near. The latter are all right in countries like England, where the rule of the road is "keep to the left," but all wrong in countries where the rule of the road is "keep to the right." The driver instinctively steers his car by the wheel over which he sits, consequently a near-side driving seat, in this country, generally finds the driver on the wrong side of the road.

After lunch we set out in a snow-storm for Corte, over an uninteresting flattish road, and soon arrived at that place, set amidst the snows of Cinto and Rotundo, and embellished with hundreds of Judas trees in full bloom.

April 28, *Tuesday*. The Park Hotel is one of those places which are very genteel and abominably comfortless. There is a bathroom, kept locked, apparently for the exclusive use of a gentleman who bathes daily at 7.30. But that is no reason why it should be locked at 7 a.m. The same thing happened in regard to the lavatory in the train from Bastia to Ajaccio. The Corsican mentality reminds me greatly of the Indian. The partitions between the rooms are so thin that you can hear every word on either side; the boards creak, a sneeze sounds like a

fog-horn, you dare not turn in bed for fear of outraging your neighbours; you ring your bell; it reverberates through the house; but not a soul answers. The meals are served late and tediously; in short, there is a great show, no privacy and no homeliness. Give me Madame Fieschi and the primitive inn of Cargèse every time.

Corte is built on the steep flank of a cliff overlooking Tavignano. The citadel dominates the place; a fortress wherein a considerable garrison is stationed; you have to send in a card to the commandant to gain admittance. The view from the summit is superb. Below you dashes the swift Tavignano, hundreds of feet below, with the old town set above it; snowy Cinto rears his head beyond; you turn, and a vast panorama of vale and mountain culminates in Monte Rotundo.

For more than three hundred years Corte changed hands continually, belonging in turn to the Genoese, the French and the Corsicans, until after the battle of Ponte Nuovo, in 1769, it became French for the last time.

The fifteenth-century historian of Corsica, Petrus Cyraneus, was born there, and Leonard de Capanova, the comrade of Sampiero. But the two men whose names are for ever linked with the town's history are Gaffori and Pascal Paoli.

After the departure of the adventurer, King Theodore de Neuhoff, the people acclaimed Gaffori as the protector of the country. He seized Corte and proclaimed there the independence of the isle. The Genoese appealed to France, and General Cursay landed with 1000 troops and occupied Corsica for five years. During that time the General tried to persuade Gaffori to bring about a reconciliation between the Corsican and the Genoese, but in vain. Genoa denounced Cursay, he was recalled and imprisoned at Antibes. After the departure of the French the islanders held a meeting at Orezza, and proclaimed Gaffori *Chef de la Nation*.

Corte was retaken, and the Genoese forced to retire to a few strongholds on the coast. Gaffori became the terror of the Genoese; the fighting spirit of Sampiero seemed to be revived in this indomitable hero, and for a time his powerful personality carried all before it. But a conspiracy was started at the instigation of Genoa, and in 1755 Gaffori was assassinated. When the body of her husband was brought to Madame Gaffori, with fine Corsican spirit she made her son, a boy of twelve, swear by the blood-stained shirt of his father, never to pardon the murderers.

Once, when Gaffori was attacking Corte, the besieged Genoese, who had seized the General's son as a hostage, exposed the child on the ramparts, hoping to deter the father from firing on the citadel. Undaunted, Gaffori continued the assault, carried the fortress and saved his boy, who was unhurt.

A bronze statue of the gallant fighter, the work of Aldabert, stands in the Place de l'Église, close to the house where Madame Gaffori was in her turn besieged by the Genoese. Opening a barrel of gunpowder she took her stand beside it, a lighted torch in her hand, threatening to blow up the house if any of the followers spoke of surrendering. This scene is depicted on one of the sides of the General's statue.

The Maison Gaffori remembers other brilliant personalities also, for Charles Bonaparte (Napoleon's father, while secretary to Paoli) and his wife Letizia lived there in 1768, and there was born Joseph Bonaparte, the future King of Spain.

At the extremity of the Cours Paoli (the principal street) is the Place Paoli, where stands a fine bronze statue of the great patriot, the work of Victor Huguenin. It was at Corte that Paoli set up his national printing press, the first to be seen in the island. He also established a University there. On the Place d'Armes, the

College Paoli of three hundred pupils is installed in what was formerly the Palais du Gouvernement, where the bedroom and bureau of the patriot can still be seen.*

Our drive this afternoon, from Corte by Venaco, Vivario and Ghisoni to Ghisonaccia, is probably the finest in the island. Yesterday was a day of biting rain and thunderstorm, and snow fell low upon the mountains; to-day the sun shone gaily over the grandest and most varied scenery conceivable. From the low-lying valley of the Golo the road rises gradually until it culminates on the terrific Col de Sorba; the snowy heights of Rotundo, d'Oro and Renoso are all in view; from an elevation of over 4000 feet tier upon tier of pine-clad mountains roll on to an incredibly distant horizon. There are three or four inches of snow up here, but good little Berliet ploughs his way through, unskidding; amidst gigantic pines the summit is reached, and the long forest descent to Ghisoni begins by way of the Col de Scozzolatojo. From Ghisoni onwards the scene completely changes. You might be in a Scottish corrie, in which runs a brawling stream; looking up at the snowy peak of Kyrie Eleison you remember that you are in Corsica. Enormous boulders, bigger than houses, strew the valley; the stream is often two hundred sheer feet beneath your wheels; beyond a wall of rock rises colossal. And then comes the third stage. Presently you find yourself on a dead flat, maquis covered; the road, as though ruled by a ruler, runs straight towards the sea. These are the dreaded malarious flats; but at this time of year the miasma is negligible. We dashed in fine style past the railway station, five kilometres from Ghisonaccia proper, and drew up at the *Hotel Pieri*, kept by the widow Franceschini.

The latter came out; a handsome, aquiline dame, with fine eyes and a polished manner. One of nature's ladies, if ever there was one. As so often happens in rather

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 223–225.

primitive lands, one was put off at the offset with a blank refusal. There was no room; she had a visitor already; we had better go back to the *gare* (station).

Having heard this kind of thing several times before, I determined to adopt my usual tactics. "What a pity, Madame! We are indeed out of luck, for your hotel is celebrated for its excellent food. You will, at any rate, not refuse to give us a cup of your delicious coffee?"

The handsome dame smiled all over and ushered us in. The leaven had already begun to work. We had not finished our coffee before she returned, saying that perhaps, after all, she could manage to put us up. I grinned my delighted thanks.

The comfort of these village inns is solid. There is no pretentious fussing; you eat, cheek by jowl with the natives, an excellently cooked, and served, meal; you are the guests of the evening, not one of a crowd; a bottle of first-rate wine is nearly always to be had. You stumble up a hen-ladder to a decent bed and sleep like a top till the sun wakes you up, or the sparrows' chattering.

The unlimited leisure of the villagers is a thing to admire and marvel at. There are no beggars; everybody seems to have a house, food and clothes, and yet the sight of men at work of any sort is exceptional.

Charcoal burning and timber felling and hauling are the staple industries, and, of course, there are the tiny terraced gardens to be tended.

But the boulevarded street here is crowded with dozens of men who, hands in pockets, walk in twos and threes up and down, or gather in knots in the road. What do they find to talk about all day and half the night?

Hindenburg's election as President may have provided a new topic, but I will lay odds that the ever young, perennial franc, her vagaries, sins and potentialities, dominates the conversation of most of the men and of all the women.

Meanwhile, dogs and donkeys of all ages and sizes invent distractions. The former pursue incoming mule-carts with savage, assumed ferocity; the young drivers lash them over the head with heavy whips; there is a bedlam of barking, shrieks and curses. Young donkeys engage in mimic warfare, rearing on their hind legs in order to savage each other's neck; a well-aimed kick, deftly landed on the boko, scores a point; excruciating brayings rend the air.

April 29, *Wednesday*. Before leaving, gracious Madame took us round her little back garden, bordered by the tumble-down shanties of her less energetic neighbours. She had dozens of grey and white rabbits, in very good condition, kept in hutches with wire-netting fronts and floors, and miniature racks, from which, like horses, they pulled their greenstuffs. Bran and barley and maize were the dry foods. Of course, they were not kept merely as pets; Madame narrated, with tender recollections, how on that very yesterday the family had despatched a plump young friend.

The little garden was green with vegetables—potatoes, carrots, spinach, garlic, onions; a couple of Japanese medlars and a large bush of marguerites, gave a less utilitarian note; and what looked like a bed of lead pencils was really a plantation of citron cuttings.

The night before I had had some excellent rosy wine, far superior, in my humble judgment, to the vaunted *Patrimonio* of Cap Corse; and on my requesting a few bottles to take away with me, a corner of the garden was smilingly indicated where dozens of waxed corks protruded from the soil, and half a dozen of the best were speedily disinterred.

The flat maquis-covered alluvial plain backed by mountains reminded us of North Africa, and the dirty, tumble-down hamlets did nothing to destroy the illusion. Millions of asphodel uplifted their pale ghostly spires

beside the lagoons bordering the sea, as the old Roman road ran straight towards the ancient Greek colony of Aleria.

We passed some very interesting troglodytic huts, semi-circular and covered with clay, exactly like those built by the Sabines reproduced in the Museo Gregoriano in the Vatican. Casabianda was the first stop; formerly a convict settlement it is now a Government experimental farm, covering a large area and growing fine crops of wheat, barley, maize and citron. Sheep and pigs are kept; but the buildings were in a parlous state, and five windows out of every six had died a paneless death. The director came out, took us for Americans, and when we indignantly said we were English, replied that it was the same thing; he discoursed on the beauty of the drive from London to Windsor, where he had once lunched with Royalty on some internationally important agricultural occasion. He pointed out an English thrashing machine, saying he was very busy. This is the first Corsican in our experience who has had the temerity to advance such a remotely veracious excuse. A partridge sat dusting himself on the drive, and flew lazily away as we approached; hereabouts there are boar, pheasants and any amount of duck, teal and other wild fowl.

Aleria, like many a Greek or Etruscan settlement, like Crustumerium near Rome, is set on a flat-topped hill rising above the surrounding marshes. Winchelsea is the English equivalent.

"Aleria, a group of hamlets by the river Tavignano, was formerly a Roman colony, founded by Sylla a century before Christ, and the Étang de Diane was its port. At the northern end of the étang is a small island, Île des Pécheurs, formed entirely of oyster shells, dating from the days when Aleria sent cargoes of salted oysters to Rome. Near by on the smaller island of Ste. Marie, a house still bears a marble slab with an inscription dated

1611, stating that the rent of the fishing was fixed at ninety pieces of silver by the bishop Decius Justinianus. The ruins at Aleria are of little interest, even if really Roman, as many people doubt. . . ."

In March, 1736, there landed at Aleria one of the most picturesque characters of that time, the German adventurer, Theodore de Neuhoff.

"From a galley flying the English flag he landed with a small band of followers, to bring liberty to the Corsicans. Magnificently attired, and a born orator, small wonder that the islanders, weary of their Genoese oppressors, fell quickly under the stranger's spell, promising all that he asked of them—a king's crown!

"Leaving them no time for their enthusiasm to cool, their future king installed himself at Cervione in the palace of the bishop—then at Genoa. His coronation took place in the neighbouring convent of Alesani; on a throne composed of an armchair flanked by chains he received his royal crown—a wreath of laurel gathered in the maquis. Being short of money he founded a coinage of his own bearing the letters T.R. (Theodore Rex). 'Tutto rame' (all copper) grumbled the fault-finders, and 'tutti rebelli' (all rebels) interpreted the Genoese.

"Theodore's reign lasted eight months only; the Corsicans, finding his dazzling promises unfulfilled, lost confidence and mutinied; and their king, under pretence of seeking money and aid on the Continent, fled to Solenzara disguised as a priest, whence he crossed in a small boat to Leghorn. He died in utter poverty, in London, in 1756.

"Horace Walpole, ridiculing him even after death, had a stone (which still exists) placed in the Church of St. Anne, Soho Square, with an ironic epitaph to the effect that Fate had given him a kingdom but had denied him bread. In the same church lies buried his son (by his

marriage with the daughter of the Earl of Kilmarnock), who shot himself in the porch of Westminster Abbey." *

Hereabouts began our ill-luck. We had two punctures in quick succession, followed by a collision. I had long foreseen that a motor tour in Corsica cannot reasonably be expected to defraud you of an accident. Now I did seriously hug myself on the fact that I had discharged Geoffrey and his nearside driven car.

We were zedding hell-bells up the hill towards Cervione, with a bank of road metal and a precipice on our left, and a masonry water channel, about a foot deep with a revetted bank on our right, when hey presto! round the turn came a large car on its wrong side, holding three men and two women. An end-on collision seemed absolutely inevitable; the women and H. all screamed at the pitch of their voices; a loud crash announced the impact; our little car subsided into the channel and lay still; the big malefactor sprawled across the road with its front wheels on the stone heap. All was over in a second, and nobody was damaged. But assuredly it was only the magnificent courage and presence of mind of Antoine that saved the situation; another six inches and the two wheels would have locked and death against that masonry wall would have been inevitable. He took the risk and the ditch, and stopped the car at the same time. It was a great performance; and I had the greatest pleasure in handing the gallant Antoine a hundred francs as a slight token of our reconnaissance.

If Geoffrey had been at the wheel of his nearside drive, such an exploit would have been impossible, and our little car would have bounded over the precipice in a thousand feet fall. As it was, only a smashed-up mudguard told the tale of our adventure. Of course, the low-class Marseillais who had so nearly done us in protested that we were all in the wrong and that they were all in the

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 91–93.

right; but the position of the cars was more eloquent than any words—our little fellow on his side against the wall; the Frenchman right across the road. Ah me! how those women jabbered! What a time the chauffeurs took to enter in greasy notebooks their respective names (with what a wealth of damnatory adjective!) and addresses (believed by both to be suburbs of Hell). But H. and I strolled on up the hill out of hearing of those nasal, raucous cacophonics; and found two bushes of lilac, apparently wild, growing far from any house.

In the inn at Cervione there were two very good things, an extremely beautiful waitress, by name Thérèse, and some excellent St. James rum, of the latter of which H. drank incredible quantities, in order, as he said, to restore his shattered nerves. Thérèse was like the old pictures of Saints Barbara and Catherine—brown-haired, grey-eyed, purity personified. Of course, there was raw ham, and of course we sent it out to be fried; and there were luscious eggs cooked with onions, and goat and cheese; indeed, we arose much fortified, and prepared to encounter still more slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune.

The view from Cervione resembles that from Albano over Ostia and the Pontine marshes; with the sea shivering beyond; the *tremolar della marina* of Dante.

After leaving Cervione we climbed high again into the mountains to a place called Orezza, which in reality is a sort of generic name, including several villages miles apart. I coveted, at Ghisonaccia, a wooden salad spoon and fork like a pair of scissors; it worked splendidly, and was quite a new gadget, as we say in our horrid modern jargon. On it was carved "Orezza," and as Madame wouldn't sell it, I determined to buy one where it was made. But every hamlet sent us on a further quest, up and down the most impossible zeds; until my patience gave way, and we returned to the main road to visit Morosaglia, the home of the famous Pasquale Paoli.

Morosaglia is at the head of a profound valley and commands splendid views of some of the highest peaks in Corsica. It was a grand, a sublime prospect that influenced the early years of the hero destined to become the Father of his country. Paoli's home is a medium-sized, whitish house by no means as large as Napoleon's, with drab walls in the small rooms, and ceilings of dark-stained pine and rafters. Here he was born in 1726, and hither his ashes, exhumed from St. Pancras, where he was buried in 1807, returned in 1889. A memorial plaque expresses the feelings of his fellow-countrymen:

Il Padre della Patria è qui Sepolto
La dove nacque ei giace
Il pio voto di Cerno ormai e sciolto
Requiescat in pace.*

The house is now the property of the nation—a gift from M. Franceschini Pietri, the Empress Eugenie's secretary, its late owner, who was chiefly instrumental in getting the remains removed from London, and who has fitted up one of the rooms as a mortuary chapel—*sacellum domus;* wherein Paoli's dust lies under a central stone and flags and wreaths and *immortelles* surround the little altar.

There is a marble bust of Paoli in the chapel—a strong, sensitive, intellectual face, with Roman nose and double chin. He wears a bob-wig and elaborate lace cravat. His coat of arms was an arm holding a sword between two palm-fronds, surmounted by a count's coronet. Later he was granted a special coat of a nigger's head bound with a white fillet between two supporters holding clubs. (It is a singular thing that this nigger's head occurs once in the arms of Corsica and four times in those of Sardinia.) There is a pitiful little collection of

* The father of his country lies buried here. Where he was born there he lies. The pious desire of Corsica is fulfilled.

his relics; a moth-eaten saddle and a malacca cane with chased ivory top.

Extract from an article in the *Petit Marseillais* of 8th May, 1925, by Jean Marie Salvadon. "A Propos de Ponte Nuovo (8th May, 1769) Pascal Paoli."

Paoli was one of those men who are an honour to mankind. The Jesuit Father Bettinelli gives the following description of him:

"He is a very well-built man with a fine figure and a well-proportioned and robust frame; his face is handsome, his features regular, his hair fair inclining to red, his eyes are flashing and full of sweetness, but yet fuller of fire, though when he gets excited in conversation they are blue. His striking face and stately bearing arrest everyone's attention. He might be taken for forty, but he is over forty-four. He must have a very strong constitution considering all his toils and hardships. All weathers are the same to him and he does not care what he eats or drinks. He is temperate in all things and cares for nothing but the pleasures of the soul. Though he is very civil to the ladies and does not forget the air of gallantry which they expect to find in all the men they like, it is easy to see that gallantry is not his calling and that he only practises it out of politeness. I have seen him with them and he was a complete man of the world. I have seen him with these ladies' children and he put himself on their level in the most natural way. He is everything he ought to be and is so without effort.

"His eloquence is innate; nowadays he has no opportunities for speaking in public, but one can see from his conversation what he was, when he was at the head of the Nation.

"He has a clear and agreeable voice, his gesticulation is full of life and go; all his movements make one feel the strength of his soul and the graces of his person. He is well acquainted with English, French and Latin, but he

prefers Italian, his native language, which he speaks very well. His style is simple and noble: in conversation he is always modest and reserved; one can feel that he is thoroughly truthful, and that there cannot therefore be the slightest doubt but that his statements are correct, and that he means what he says.

"It is a real pleasure to hear him let himself go when he is in the company which he likes of well-informed and sensible people. It is at such times that one can admire those qualities of heart and soul which make him unique amongst men. He has all the solid qualities of the legislator, the philosopher and the soldier united to all the knowledge of men of science and men of letters and the manners and graces of a courtier and the ease, kindness and affability of a man of the world. Such are the elements which go to make up this man who is an honour to the human race. His memory is marvellous: history, poetry, the ancients, the moderns, all the great masters and their best works furnish him with topics for conversation and embellish his discourse, though his quotations have not the slightest tinge of either vanity or pedantry.

"He has not been so engrossed in his studies of antiquity as to neglect that of men and of his own time. No philosopher or politician could have a better acquaintance with the human heart and the affairs of Europe.

"One can never tire of listening to him talking about laws, the art of government, administrations and ministers, for he has been in the closest relations with the great, and, indeed, with nearly every power, and knows all their strong and weak points, their merits and defects from their letters, their treaties and lastly, from their intrigues."

One anecdote more in honour of "The Father of his Country."

A lady belonging to the Court of the Emperor

Joseph II, in praising a musician to His Majesty, used the words: "He is a wonderful man" (Questo è un bravo uomo). The emperor replied: "Questo è un bravo musico"—he is a wonderful musician. And then, pointing to Paoli, added: "Quello è un bravo uomo" (That is a wonderful man).

Pascal Paoli was only twenty-seven when he was chosen as the chief of the Corsican nation after the assassination of Gaffori in 1755. By sheer force of genius he made himself the absolute master of his spiteful and jealous rivals the Matra, the Grimaldi, etc.

He was able to raise and equip an army of 25,000 men in a country exhausted by the strife of factions and exposed to every kind of exactions, and these troops were regularly supplied and reinforced. His fortresses were in admirable order. He enforced "Paoli's justice" in the Maquis where the vendetta reigned supreme, and rebels and traitors received inexorable punishment.

As he knew that knowledge spells progress, he founded the University of Corte and issued a new coinage to encourage trade and industry. As he was anxious also that the Corsicans should be a well-informed people, he established a printing office at Campoloro, at which the first newspaper which appeared in the island, the *Corsican News*, was published.

Thus it came about that the Genoese were powerless to erect any barrier which could stay the onrush of the Independence of Corsica.

Paoli was not present at Ponte Nuovo. General Camonge, in commenting on this defeat, which may well be termed Providential, seeing that it was to bring about such happy results, says:

"All the qualities of the Corsicans were destined to be of no avail to the great cause for which they fought because they were so abominably led."

The Corsicans did not fail to maintain their ancient

reputation as brave soldiers, and if any one in 1769 failed his fatherland, it was not the humblest of Corsican children, but he whose past services had rendered him the most illustrious of her sons.

The battle was begun without orders. Gaffori evacuated Lento almost without firing a shot; Grimaldi showed himself absolutely incompetent to defend Canavaggia; the Prussians * threw our army into confusion and disorder and transformed a skirmish into a total defeat.

Our Themistocles made his way into exile.

It was at Stretta, a hamlet of Morosaglia, that Pascal Paoli was born on April 5th, 1726—the man whose name was destined to be linked eternally with that of Corsica, and who won from the islanders the affectionate title of " Father of the Country."

Younger son of Hyacinth Paoli, an already well-known patriot and brother of Clement—that remarkable character, half-soldier, half-monk, whose brilliant feats of arms did so much to aid his brother—small wonder that Pascal Paoli's thoughts and aims all turned to his country and her needs. At an age when most boys think more of play than learning, this boy was poring over books on the exploitation of mines, and the science of governing. He must have had even then a presentiment of the part he would one day be called upon to play. When he was fourteen, Pascal Paoli went with his father to live at Naples, for the latter, with several others, was exiled from his country, and there the boy studied under the famous philosopher Genovesi. Never losing sight of his country's needs, which he had so much at heart, Paoli studied with all the strength of his brilliant intellect the lessons of a master well versed in philosophy and

* The Prussians were troops who had been enrolled by Paoli after they had been disbanded in 1763, and who were bribed by the Genoese to leave the Corsicans in the lurch at the battle of Ponte Nuovo.

political economy, lessons which bore fruit in after years, by giving to his country a governor who studied the wants of his people. Military knowledge also was not neglected, for he realised that it was necessary to conquer and hold his country. While serving under the Sicilian king he made a name for himself during the Calabrian War by his coolness and bravery.

In those days Corsica was being governed by four men, Clement Paoli, Thomas Santini, Pierre Frediani and Dr. Grimaldi. In 1754 these four recognised the need of a master mind, and their choice fell on Pascal Paoli, then but twenty-eight years of age. He landed at Aleria in April, 1755, empty-handed it is true, but with a mind full of plans for a Constitution, which was a forerunner of that of France and the United States, and which promised election, the sovereignty of the people, and the separation of powers.

In the following July he was proclaimed General-in-Chief of the Corsicans at the Convent of San Antonia della Casabianca. The task before him was stupendous, he had literally to bring order out of chaos. Never, perhaps, had the condition of the island been so bad. The Genoese oppressors, it is true, had been driven out, except from a few of the coast strongholds, but trade and agriculture had long been neglected, poverty was everywhere, law and order were unknown, and in consequence the vendetta was rampant throughout the land. Paoli held the custom of vendetta in abhorrence, and used every means to combat the scourge. One of his first acts after becoming General was to condemn one of his own relatives found guilty of vendetta. The uncle of the condemned man came to Paoli, begging him to pardon his nephew, and promising in return a certain sum of money, and also a company of fifty men to be maintained at his expense for as long as the siege of Furiani—which was then in progress—should continue.

Paoli (knowing the honesty and patriotism of the man before him) replied that he had such faith in his uprightness that the pardon would be granted on condition that the uncle would publicly declare it to be honourable and useful to the country. With tears in his eyes the uncle withdrew, saying: "Please God I shall never tarnish my country or my conscience by such a declaration!" From this incident comes the expression "Giustizia Paolina," used to-day.

Several French writers have said that Paoli, seeing the influence he had over his people, hoped eventually to be made king of the island. I should imagine that nothing was farther from the thoughts of this man, who cared little for fame or riches, whose one care was for his country. If he had had any idea of becoming supreme master, he would surely have prepared the way, whereas never in all his public life did he show the least desire to tyrannise, all his actions showed care for the liberty and independence of his people. Also it was hardly possible for him to become the supreme power (though his was the brain that conceived all the plans for the development of the country), for he was expected to render an account of all his actions, his correspondence with foreign courts, secret negotiations, etc., to the Assembly which had named him General-in-Chief.

It is true that after 1765, when difficulties were increasing daily, Paoli was given full and supreme power; he had the direction of the army, navy, commerce and the administration of the State revenues, but he never failed in what he considered his duty—to keep the Assembly informed of all that was done.

Upon becoming General, agriculture was his first care. The difficulties were great at first, on account of the bandits who infested parts of the island, and bribed by Genoa did their utmost to hinder the workers.

The previous long period of inactivity also had bred

other tastes in the people; they preferred to hunt or gamble rather than to work. But little by little the island began to flourish, and soon enjoyed an agricultural prosperity never known again since that time. Paoli introduced the cultivation of potatoes, and his enemies in derision nicknamed him the "Generale delle patate," a title of which he was very proud. "Yesterday," he wrote to a friend, "I had potatoes planted. I intend to make them popular by having them on my table daily."

A mint was established at Murato, and at the appeal of Paoli every parish brought to him its superfluous objects of gold and silver. The pieces of money struck bore the arms of Corsica.

Paoli encouraged industry, which was practically unknown in the island. He established a powder mill, a manufactory of weapons and a smelting house.

At Corte, the seat of the government, a University was founded in 1763, with the object of spreading education in the island. Up till then young men desiring study had been compelled to seek education in Spain and Italy, owing to the lack of professors in Corsica. The creation of a University necessitated the establishment of a printing press, which was set up at Cervione and later moved to Corte. The first work printed was the "Giustificazione della rivoluzione di Corsica," by the Canon Don Gregoire Salvini, a book which made a great sensation in France and Italy, and demonstrated to Europe the justice of the Corsican cause and the tyranny of Genoa. A weekly paper also appeared under the title of Ragguagli dell' isola di Corsica, recounting all that was passing in the isle and the affairs of the Government.

Brought up by an extremely religious father, and in a country where the Catholic religion was the only one known, Paoli kept always a great respect for the Church.

He was therefore greatly distressed to see that in the midst of the law and order gradually being built up by the Government, the churches were still in disorder and no regular services held, owing to the desertion of the bishops, who at the instigation of Genoa had abandoned their flocks. Genoa hoped by this to alienate the clergy from Paoli. But the remaining priests and monks were full of zeal for their country, and continually besought Paoli to appeal to the Pope (Clement XIII), in consequence of which the Bishop of Segni, Monseigneur Crescenzio di Angelo, a capable and pious man, was sent to visit the island.

In recognition of the Pope's act in sending the prelate, the Assembly decreed that henceforward they would take no part in the administration of the Church revenues, but would place it entirely in the hands of the distinguished visitor, who quickly restored order all over the island, and before leaving named a vicar to take the place of the absent bishops.

Genoa, seeing little hope of regaining or holding Corsica alone, appealed to France, and the Treaty of Compiègne was signed, by which the French agreed to occupy for four years the strongholds which were still in the hands of the Genoese.

Since the beginning of his administration, Paoli had always planned to profit by the huge forests of the island and its ports, to create a navy capable of holding its own against Genoa, and safeguarding Corsican commerce. His plans were realised, and so strong did the little fleet become, that an expedition was carried out against the island of Capraja, which was obliged to capitulate. The Corsicans were overjoyed, and prayers of thanksgiving were offered in all the churches, "in order," said Paoli, "that the Lord may continue to give us His divine aid in all our enterprises, undertaken for the peace and prosperity of the people."

James Boswell, while travelling in Corsica, became very friendly with Paoli and gives many interesting details of him in his book, "An Account of Corsica," the journal of a tour in that island. He visited the General at Sollacaro, and found him "tall, strong and well made; of a fair complexion, a sensible, free and open countenance, and a manly and noble carriage."

Paoli was a great physiognomist, being continually in danger from treachery and assassination, he made a habit of studying every new face. Boswell seems to have found this scrutiny somewhat trying, for he remarks: "He was polite but very reserved. I had stood in the presence of many a prince, but I never had such a trial as in the presence of Paoli."

And again: "This interview was for a while very severe upon me. I was much relieved when his reserve wore off and he began to speak more."

The great patriot's tastes were simple. Until the French arrived in the island, he always wore the ordinary Corsican dress, but when they came he thought a little more elegance in his attire was preferable: "to make the Government appear in a more respectable light," as he himself said.

He cared nothing for luxury, ate only simple food and drank no foreign wines. While at Naples he made the acquaintance of several Irish gentlemen in the service of the king, and from these he learnt to speak English tolerably well. He seems always to have had a great sympathy with the English.

For ten years Paoli saw his dreams of a prosperous island realised, and then almost without warning the blow fell.

The court of Versailles entered into correspondence with Paoli, and the Duc de Choiseul offered him the rank of colonel in the French service. The insult was great, to offer such a position to a man who reigned

supreme as Paoli did. He replied courteously, however, and refused. De Choiseul then proposed to name him King of Corsica, under the sovereignty of Genoa, and the guarantee of France.

After consulting his compatriots, Paoli accepted the offer, but on learning the price demanded—the abandoning of certain ports to the Genoese—he indignantly refused.

At Versailles on May 5th, 1768, de Choiseul, in the name of Louis XV, signed the treaty by which Genoa sold Corsica to France.

Royalty and a bank of merchants bargained together, and sold a free people "like a flock of sheep," as Paoli said.

The National Convention was called together at Corte on May 29th, and after a fiery speech by Charles Bonaparte, one and all voted for war. Paoli put in line 20,000 men, but the French disembarked 12,000 under Marboeuf in July, and 15,000 under Chauvelin in August, who also brought the official Proclamation of Louis XV, annexing Corsica to France.

Superiority of numbers did not, however, prevent the French troops from suffering severe defeat at Borgo, while a relieving force from Bastia was hurled back in total disorder, and with heavy losses.

Paoli, putting reason before sentiment, proposed that Corsica should recognise the sovereignty of Louis XV, but should retain its constitution. France refused, and the duel continued.

Paoli chose his positions well, and his left wing held the strategic point at Monte Tenda, which dominates Cap Corse, La Balagne, and the open route to Corte. The French troops were now under a new leader, the Count de Vaux, a clever tactician, who had already seen service in the island. Under combined attacks the islanders resisted strongly, and their position would have been hopeful had they not been greatly out-

numbered. De Vaux, however, made good use of a lesson learnt from the Genoese, and scattered gold freely in the country. Two of the Corsican leaders, Grimaldi and one of the Gaffori family, succumbed to the temptation and abandoned their positions. For the Paolists it was the beginning of the end; step by step, fighting desperately, they slowly retreated, and de Vaux was soon in possession of the heights.

The 8th May dawned, that fatal day which Corsica will never forget, and found Paoli's troops falling back upon Ponte Nuovo, which spans the Golo River. The bridge was held by Prussian mercenaries, for Paoli had been obliged to have recourse to outside aid during this last hard struggle. The bridge was barricaded, only a small passage being left open.

The islanders, hard pressed, were retreating towards the bridge, their only hope of escape, when by mistake —or treachery as some think—they were met by a devastating fire from the Prussians. The French pressed forward, and the fight on the bridge became a ghastly massacre.

Gaffori, with the strong force he commanded, might possibly have saved the day, and the Corsicans fought on as long as possible, awaiting him, but he had already betrayed them and never came. The remnant of Paoli's men finally gave way and fled to the Castagniccia, their struggle for freedom over.

Paoli made his way to Porto Vecchio, where on June 11th he embarked for England, who offered him hospitality. For years he lived an exile's life in London, receiving from the English Government a pension of £2000, a sum which he shared with several other exiled countrymen.

Not twenty years later came the Revolution, heralding a changed order of things in France, and the patriot in his quiet London home was roused once more to action.

At the earnest request of his compatriots he went to Paris, where he was received with the utmost enthusiasm as "the martyr of liberty." Corsica was to be free again; France desiring her own freedom could do no less than liberate the island.

Paoli landed at Macinajo in Cap Corse on July 16th, 1789. Kneeling, with tears in his eyes, to kiss the soil, he cried: "Oh, my country, I left you in bondage, I return to find you free!"

The whole island rejoiced at his return, and he was at once made President of the National Assembly. His task was perhaps even harder than before. Although it was through France's Revolution that Paoli came again into his own, he was powerfully influenced by those troubled times. First and foremost he was a humanitarian, and the nightmare of blood and slaughter horrified him. His followers were divided, those who desired to break entirely with France, and those who regarded the Revolution as necessary, a terrible means to a glorious end. Jealousy and intrigues soon began to make themselves felt, and finally the French Convention accused Paoli and found him guilty (as they said) of trying to separate Corsica from France. The island was proclaimed free and independent again by the indignant Paolists, and internal war being imminent, Paoli appealed for help to England. Admiral Hood was sent with a fleet, and took St. Florent, Bastia, and Calvi, subduing the north while the Paolists conquered the south.

The former Constitution was restored, with the difference that the legislative power was vested in the King of England, as well as in the islanders, and the King's representative was to have the title of Viceroy. Sir Gilbert Elliot was sent, and for two years governed the island. Opinions differ as to whether Paoli and Elliot were friends or enemies. Some say they were on

the best of terms, and that Paoli's subsequent departure for London was in no way due to the Viceroy, but merely the natural desire of an old man (Paoli was then seventy), who had lived a strenuous life, and who now saw his country prospering, and felt himself free to live a retired life in the land he so much admired. Others say that Elliot found that too many grumblers were finding their way to Paoli's quarters at Morosaglia, and that he feared a fresh rebellion. So one day the patriot received a letter from the English King, courteously inviting him to return to London.

It was an order of exile, which Paoli well understood, and he left his beloved country for the last time in October 1795 to make his home in London, where he died twelve years later, on 5th February, 1807. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Pancras. In August 1889, following upon funds voted by the "Conseil Général" of Corsica, and a public subscription, a commission went to London and exhumed Paoli's remains. On the 4th of September, they arrived by the ship *Count Baciocchi* at Ile Rousse, the port founded by Paoli a hundred and twenty years before. Corsican patriots wearing uniforms and carrying arms dating from the wars of independence, precious heritages from their fathers, attended the procession, followed by an immense crowd.

They arrived at Morosaglia at twilight—all' imbrunir della notte—the hour beloved of Paoli. For three days the precious remains lay in state, then on September 17th, under triumphal arches, the bier was carried to the house where Paoli was born, which had been repaired and offered by Paoli's heir, Francheschini Pietri.

The lower room was transformed into a mortuary chapel, and there the "Father of the Country" rests in peace. Over the entrance door a marble slab bears in Corsican the words: "The Father of the Country

is here buried. He lies where he was born. The pious wish of Corsica is fulfilled."

Morosaglia possesses a special school, "l'école de Paoli," founded by the patriot in the old Franciscan convent. The village is surrounded by magnificent chestnut trees, and as the road mounts towards the Col de Prato, there are fine views of Cinto and Paglia Orba.

From Morosaglia to Ponte Leccia is a long gentle slope, *facilis descensus;* and this time we deserted the Hôtel de la Gare, and went to the Hôtel Cyrnos, which Antoine declared was kept by an American; but the American turned out to be a fat old Corsican woman of benign appearance, who regretted she had sent all her trout to Corte, but promised to have some ready for us at 8 a.m. to-morrow. There we had an excellent dinner, topped up with apricot jam and clean and comfortable beds.

April 30th, Thursday. A dull and misty day, which of course turned to rain just as I was sketching the historic Ponte Nuovo.

The road follows the course of the Golo for some way and then deserts that rampagious stream for the flats that fringe all this eastern coast. The novelty in the way of cultivation was the large number and extent of lupin fields.

At times the road had a very homely look; white hawthorn blew over bracken, and yellow flag iris gleamed in the ditches. And so we came to Bastia—as wet and muddy and bumpy as of yore, and now in the throes of a municipal election which prompts the youth of the city to perambulate the streets at nightfall singing —good songs with a lilt to them, provocative, interspersed with cheers as friends are met, and booings and jeers as the enemy disappears down side alleys.

May 1st, Friday. To-day I am deprived of the advantage of H.'s society, for he is gone to Ajaccio to

plunder the archives. Consequently I shall have to do the tour of Cap Corse, the northern promontory of the island, by myself. The motor is hired till the 12th May, but it occurs to me that ten days is a good deal more than enough in which to visit the few interesting places still unvisited, and that the trip can be successfully ended by Tuesday next, the 5th, the day the weekly boat starts for Leghorn. Unfortunately for the mental peace of Corsica, the municipal elections take place on May 3rd. Every café is the rendezvous of coffee-housing politicians; black-avised blackguards in black hats and black coats, striped trousers baggy at the knee and tight over the boot, local Tapers and Tadpoles, distribute mysterious papers; they tout for votes after the fashion of their kind, taking a recalcitrant ostentatiously into the middle of the street, the cynosure of all eyes, talking to him as though the fate of Europe hung on his decision, and finally annexing him through the more satisfying argument of a foaming bock.

Our chauffeur Antoine has several times adverted to the subject of the elections, and proudly intimates that his father is likely to be elected Maire. One day he flabbergasted me by coolly asking if I would let him drive the car all night, from wherever we happened to be on the 2nd to Ajaccio, vote for his father and return on the 3rd. At first I gave him a blank refusal; but at that time having lots of time to spare, I intimated later that I might let him go. But the change of plan in regard to our departure changed everything. I told Antoine that he would have to give up the idea of driving my car to Ajaccio and back; that I wanted the car myself and himself to drive it, every day till I left the island. This decision infuriated the Corsican. He drove me as far as Santa Severa, on the road to Luri, where I had a perfectly heavenly lunch, provided by a charming lady who talked excellent French.

While I was drinking my coffee, Master Antoine came up and insolently told me that whatever I said he was going to Ajaccio to vote for his father, and that if I objected I could go to the devil. This was *un peu trop fort;* I invited him to take his coat off, but he wasn't taking any. I told him that I'd paid for the car and for him to drive it; the fool replied that I might have paid for the car, but he was not a machine to be bought or sold, he was a free Corsican, and didn't care a damn for anybody. He stormed and cursed; and soon a little crowd collected. Presently a car, going north, drove up. Antoine went to my car, took out his gun and cartridges and wallet and marched off to get a lift from the strangers. I also marched on them and told them that if they dared to assist my deserting chauffeur I would have them put in prison as well as him. This seemed to unsettle them; I walked back calmly to my seat in the sun, where the little chicks fought for the crumbs, and left them all disputing. Five minutes afterwards Antoine came back also, foiled in his design of flight, fingering his gun and looking black murder at me. I really thought I was for it that time.

Corsican travel is not devoid of incident. But certainly it is not the place for people with weak nerves. Having shown my receipt from that scoundrel, Pozzo di Borgo for the car and the chauffeur, 2760 fr., no less, and given my card to my host and hostess, summoning them to appear if called on as witnesses of my treacherous desertion by the ineffable Antoine (all this within his earshot), I commanded Antoine to drive me back to Bastia, and he did so.

Here I would interpolate a few remarks as to the manner in which British subjects are treated by H. B. M.'s Consul in Ajaccio. He is paid to look after their interests and I will tell you how he does it. He puts up a notice that he is to be found in Room 89 every weekday between

ten and twelve, and one and two. I called on him thrice between those hours (and left a card) and on no occasion was there even an office boy to respond to one's knock. The Consulate was empty. Why did I go to this Mr. Routley, our *fainéant* Consul? Because I wanted to find out more about Pozzo di Borgo and to tie the old man up tightly. If I had got hold of the Consul and carried out my intention this infernal mishap would never have occurred. So, arrived once more in Bastia, I visited our Vice-Consul, M. Bézert, a very pleasant little Frenchman. When I told him of my failure to locate Mr. Routley in Ajaccio he exclaimed: "Why, he has nothing to do!" and when I rejoined: "And he does it," he burst into Homeric laughter.

I arranged to secure his company at dinner to-night, when I hope to improve my knowledge of Corsican trade, which is practically all done from this port. He told me he had seen Clement Shorter and H. W. Massingham here last year, and that Shorter had written an article in the *Outlook* about his visit. Poor Massingham is since dead. I once talked to Shorter across the table at a public dinner; he is a modest person for one so erudite. I remember I made the most of my time and put him through a sort of Shorter catechism.

To return, M. Bézert tells me that the lupins are cultivated for their seeds which are ground into a cake for cattle. The soil is not tilled for the crop, the seeds are simply broadcast on the unbroken surface.

Then I indited the following spirited epistle to H.B.M.'s Consul at Ajaccio.

"Sir, When lately at Ajaccio, I called three times on you, in order to obtain your assistance in regard to a contract with one Pozzo di Borgo of the *Agence Corse*; but on no occasion did I find you or anyone else at the Consulate, although my calls were paid during the hours

indicated by yourself. Your abstention from your duties has landed me in a grave inconvenience. The chauffeur provided by Borgo has deserted me in order to go to Ajaccio to vote for his father, Desanti. Having paid 2760 francs (for which I hold the receipt) for the motor and the services of the chauffeur (up to May 12th), I consider that this affair merits your attention. Unless Borgo refunds me 1000 francs' damages I shall ask you to enforce your authority to obtain it. I leave this matter in your hands, and trust that British interests may be safeguarded. I enclose my second card (having already left one on your disregarded table at Ajaccio) and am,

Your obedient servant,"

But the spirited epistle was never despatched.

It is impossible to contend on equal terms with Corsican elections; you might as well pit your puny forces against rate collectors or Death.

May 2nd, Saturday. Driven out of my head by the less important happenings of yesterday, I forgot to note that not far from Bastia, on the road to Saint Severe, I found a new flower—a lovely white *fleur-de-lys* with yellow centre, six blue-shaded central petals and six snowy outer ones, six white anthers and a yellow pistil. My prize carried a head of six flowers, only two of which were out. I think I shall christen it *Lilium sexophyllum!* On reviewing the situation in my bath (there is actually a bathroom here) I came to the conclusion that the only thing to do was to change my plans once more; remain till the 12th in the island, and thus utilise the already paid-for motor. The unspeakable Antoine should be granted a free pardon and piously released to dash the 150 kilometres to vote for his accursed sire; yea, even though it were at my charges; burning my essence, deflating my tyres, inflating my bill and wasting my time.

So down to the breakfast room I marched in magnanimous mood; I spied the fussy, important little manager and confided my project to him; with a portentous wink, he straightway took, unasked, the whole affair into his own hands. Silently he turned and vanished, and two minutes later I saw him in intimate and patronising talk with Antoine. The dramatic edge was thus rudely taken from my pacific and condescending announcement; I was left in the degrading position of a marshal persuaded into pusillanimous measures by a miserable lieutenant.

So the office of the steamer was again visited at 8 a.m., and there, sure enough, sat the black-bearded gentleman, as usual wearing his large black hat and smoking his large black pipe; it is my firm conviction that that sphinx-like creature never eats, drinks or sleeps, but sits eternally hatted in his chair smoking an eternal pipe.

Later I called on M. Bézert, who was unfeignedly glad to hear my decision. He had sought legal advice: Antoine's action was not an affair of the police; it was not a crime, but merely a breach of contract such as every self-respecting and pious Corsican chauffeur would inevitably commit at election time. An action might lie against the egregious Pozzobelly, but it would cost a lot of money and be sure to be dismissed.

After lunch I hired a motor and had a truly delightful afternoon. The sun shone, the nightingales sang and the road to St. Florent and Oletta was compact of beauty.

Only airmen and birds can see a country as you see it from a motor in Corsica. Below you the land is spread out as the larks see it, in all its myriad diversities, and the eye travels, unchecked by rolling undulations, over immense spaces—fulvous vineyard, brilliant corn, grey olives framing dun mountain villages, maquis dark against the luminous sky.

We passed through the village of Patrimonio, famous for its wine, and possessing an uncommonly fine church and campanile. The grand bay of St. Florent opened out, and by a slow stream grew masses of oleander, the first I had seen in Corsica. What a pity they are not yet in flower! I remember the last time I saw them growing wild, long ago by the banks of Lake Gennesaret, and was moved to apostrophise them in verse:

> Ye rosy oleanders of the stream,
> Lift to the blue the radiance of your sheaves;
> Gambol, ye black flocks, dream, girl-shepherds, dream
> Beneath the shadow of their emerald leaves.

Here the nightingales were vocal; a lovely pink convolvulus, two inches in diameter, grew near woodruff, under a hawthorn hedge in flower, scenting all the air; over the hedge a placid ox drew a plough between the rows of vines. Oletta is a most picturesque village, hanging precariously, like so many another, to the steep flank of a mountain; the view from it is entrancing, over chain after chain of hills, with their subtle gradations of tone drooping to the sapphire diamond-set curve of the sea. If I had to choose a site for a house in this island, I would place it in Oletta.

And then a long descent, overlooking the lagoons of the eastern coast, to the dull road that ends in Bastia. Bastia the windy, the dusty, the bumpy, the paper strewn, the smelly and goodness gracious only knows what else besides.

A letter from H. who can find nothing of value in the Ajaccian archives and who hopes to rejoin me to-morrow. He encloses some excellent reviews of his *mag. op.* "Sidelights on the Thirty Years' War." M. Bézert told me yesterday that one of the chief exports of this town is tannin, made out of chestnut wood, and sent principally to England.

Near St. Florent is the Torre della Martella which gave Pitt his idea of Martello towers.

And thus ends a day as charming as yesterday was odious.

May 3rd, Sunday. Thank God! the fateful day has dawned; the municipal elections will be over to-night and by to-morrow Corsica will have returned to a state of comparative sanity.

Last night was a riot of crescendo enthusiasm, singing, booing and cheering. It was all very well at ten, when I went to bed; and the perpetually recurring refrain of the favourite chanty—DCD, DCD, DBGD, Ha! ha! ho! ho!—lustily shouted in unison by hundreds of bass voices, fading gradually away as the processionists honoured the remoter suburbs, produced a not unpleasing effect. It was quite a different affair to be awakened by the same scallywags roaring the same song, even if with slightly huskier voices, right under your open window at 2 a.m.

It is a glorious day; the biting wind has blown itself out and I spent an hour or two very pleasantly in the hotel garden, reading friend Lear and marvelling at his industry and graphic and literary skill. The amount he absorbed and put forth about Corsica in the short space of six weeks is incredible.

The garden is pretty and well kept, with its long line of date-palms guarded by marble lions. There is a shrub with an exceedingly sweet scent, in habit much resembling *Choisya ternata*, lilac, marguerites, carnations, zinnias, snap-dragon, chrysanthemums, hollyhocks: all bordered by deep bands of blue iris.

The place *par excellence* of Bastia, stretching illimitable beyond the hotel garden, is a dusty sahara of small stones of vindictive character, penetrating the joints of your harness and of your feet. On the side towards the mole it is flanked by a long line of date palms; on the

inner flank very much docked plane trees face the tall houses. At the far end stands the inevitable statue of Napoleon in the anachronistic robes of a Roman Emperor; in the centre is a bandstand; nearer rises a new piece of statuary, of indeterminate character; two figures appear to be those of a woman leading a boy, who carries in his right hand a beauty bag; but as their heads are swathed in red bath towels, it is really impossible to pronounce a final opinion either as to their artistic value or allegorical significance. I can only assure you that the boy's legs are wholly disproportionate to his body; and that he appears to have no neck whatsoever.

May 4th, Monday. I am profoundly convinced that Sebastians, or Bastians, never go to bed. Last night, or rather this morning, at 3 a.m., they were still shouting their political slogans; the streets were in a tumult, and a pack of ferocious dogs growled in chorus. At 6.30 I hurry to find our little waiter. "Has my chauffeur returned?" I enquire anxiously.

He departs and returns saying, "No, not yet, but perhaps he will return this afternoon." The swine swore he would be back yesterday by 3 p.m. at the latest. This is the way these people treat liberal employers. The moral disorganisation caused by these trumpery elections was emphasised by a remark of the *concierge* yesterday. Wait till to-morrow, and you will see in the paper that forty or fifty people have been killed and twice as many wounded. When Antoine returned in the evening he confirmed this prophecy in a remarkable manner.

Elections in Corsica.

We were so fortunate as to be in Corsica on the day of the Municipal Elections, Sunday, May 3rd. To the Corsican an election is what Derby Day, a Cup Day, or Henley Regatta is to an Englishman. To him his parish

and his family are all in all. Politics are a matter of the parish pump and of family feuds, another choice of a town councillor may lead to many a murder.

For a week before the fateful date, Ajaccio was as agitated as a bribery borough used to be in the days of open voting. The streets were alive with processions, open-air meetings enlivened by fireworks were held in every open space, the sound of exploding blank cartridges rang through the air, babes wearing purple favours proclaimed the names of the Bonapartist candidates, and small boys wearing green or red favours came to fisticuffs over the merits of their respective leaders.

Candidates in Corsica are allowed to pay the travelling expenses of the voters and the hotels were overcrowded by enthusiastic partisans who had embraced the opportunity of a free trip to their native land from points as distant as Indo-China and Buenos Aires. At four o'clock on the morning of the Saturday preceding the fateful day, sleep became impossible, for the raucous voices of electors taking the early boat for the south rang through their echoing corridors.

Twenty years ago murder was the natural concomitant of a Corsican polling day even in the large towns, but now all the cafés were closed for thirty-six hours and the stocks of the local gunsmiths were said to be sold out, sanguine speculators predicted that the occasion would pass off without bloodshed.

Their hopes were doomed to be disappointed. At Ajaccio, it is true, apathy to a certain extent took the place of enthusiasm. Dogs wore election colours, and the loungers on the Place Napoleon stared when a lady in a violet hat was seen walking with a beau from whose pocket protruded a scarlet handkerchief. But two thousand voters failed to appear at the booths, and most of the candidates will have to undergo the ordeal of the second vote.

Things were different in the country, where politics, save the mark, and family feuds are taken more seriously than in places blessed with cinemas and football teams.

At Cauro, a village to which H. had been advised to resort to see the humours of a country election, blood flowed in the good old-fashioned style. About 5 p.m. a gentleman who had been drawing Dutch courage from the local vintage arrived at the polling station and, no doubt seeing double, endeavoured to deposit two voting tickets in the urn. His action was quickly detected, and a pistol shot rang through the hall and sent the voter to another world. The victim's brother was present. He drew his knife and rushed after the murderer who, however, vanished through the side door and disappeared into the maquis, in other words, commenced life as a bandit. He will not have an unpleasant existence, for as long as he keeps away from the towns, he will be the welcome guest of every true Corsican, and later on may even be able to receive tourists at stated and heavy fees, and be filmed by appointment, by enterprising American and Belgian agents. Seeing that the murderer had vamoosed, the would-be avenger turned his attention to the presiding officer, the Mayor, who fled to his house, where he was besieged for five hours, until the Préfet with a large force of gendarmes arrived from Ajaccio, and kept watch and ward in the village all night. Three dead and about thirty wounded paid for the attempted fraud.

Ajaccio kept up its election revelry until four a.m. on Monday morning, and H., wearied and sleepless, took his place in a crowded train to Bastia to be entertained during his journey by more or less apocryphal stories of election doings.

One of his fellow travellers, evidently a well-to-do resident of Bastia, was Mayor of a small village near Corte and solemnly related to his acquaintances how

he had saved his party by polling a dead man. There were only some eighty voters in the place, and as elections in France have to be made by an absolute majority of those voting, the successful list would have to poll at least forty. It was known that parties were very evenly balanced, and one of the Mayor's supporters was known to be drawing very near to his end. Like a true Corsican, however, he deemed death a mere trifle when compared with the failure to cast his vote. Accordingly, he was carried on a litter to the polling booth, attended by a crowd of loving and armed relations. He reached the table supported in their arms, but, even in such circumstances they were not allowed to accompany him into the compartment where he was to mark his paper. He staggered into it alone. Eager eyes of friend and foe were watching his every movement. He failed to reappear. The Mayor entered the cabinet and found the voter leaning against the table clutching the paper in his nerveless hands. What was to be done? Ordinary observers would have proclaimed him to be dead, but the just, we are told, shall live by faith, and, at all events he had been a faithful partisan of his party, who, accordingly, proceeded to proclaim him alive and clamoured that his vote should be recorded as he had made the whole village aware of his intentions.

What was to be done? The Mayor's refusal to act might, as he said, have led to a riot, and the riot might well have enriched the local undertakers with the price of several first-class funerals. The loss of the vote might mean the defeat of his party. H.'s friend rose to the occasion once more, he took the ticket from the dead man's hand and deposited it in the urn. The result of his intervention was the triumph of his party list by one vote. As the Mayor piously remarked: "His Maker knows how he marked his paper." The Corsicans are emotional and devotional.

The local doctor was, of course, sent for at once. A true partisan he could only state that the man was dead, but that he was utterly unable to certify for how long he had been so.

In consequence, as the Mayor's brother, who seems to be an authority on Election Law, informed him, it may be possible to avoid an election petition.

Other gentlemen related other anecdotes bearing on the elections. In one village the candidate had spent 40,000 francs in bringing electors to the poll, and had paid the expenses of two patriots from Indo-China. He had failed owing to the negligence of his Agent who had omitted to bring to the poll eleven voters living in the village itself. I seem to recollect similar incidents nearer home, but it might be interesting to scan the Agent's banking-account.

Election expenses are no doubt heavy, but the chosen ones recoup themselves. The candidate who spent 40,000 francs on his election had, on a previous occasion, made in one deal 60,000 over a very dubious paving contract. Of the doubtful nature of the said contract I can easily be convinced.

Next year there are to be the District Council elections, and in the following one the County Council election. Thus the Corsicans can never share the fate which, as Defoe tells us, befell the electorate of the Hampshire borough of, I think, Whitchurch, who nearly starved when, in 1716, the Septennial Act increased the duration of the English Parliaments from three years to seven.

Yet in Corsica the Parliamentary elections create no excitement. Experience, no doubt, has shown that no graft is to be got out of them. It was otherwise under the Second Empire when Corsicans swarmed in the police and the Civil Service. The old police barracks at Vescovato still bears the inscription: "Gendarmerie Impériale." Time stands still there.

I hired a car, after visiting the Consulate, and directing the subordinate to telephone to the Consul in Ajaccio demanding the head of Pozzobelly on a charger, and motored out again to St. Severe of mixed memories, and thence by Luri to Pino.

The old convent of St. Nicholas stands back from the road in an ilex wood at the foot of the great rock, up which a narrow track leads to the summit, from where the view is superb. According to tradition, Seneca passed seven years in the old tower there. The nettles growing in the vicinity are still called *Ortica di Seneca* (Seneca's nettles) —because they were used by the peasants to chastise the philosopher on the occasion of his attempting to embrace a young peasant girl.*

I found a purple gladiolus, wild and slim, by the roadside, and at the corner of St. Severe a tiny toddler got in front of the car, the infernal driver made no attempt to stop (which he easily could have done) and for one awful moment I thought murder would be added to the list of these chauffeurs' delinquencies. But a horrid woman rushed into the roadway, threw the child on its face in the dust and proceeded to administer violent and most unnecessary chastisement.

Luri is a sylvan glade—a place of tranquil brooks and spreading olives, domestic, restful, quite un-Corsican; the hills that enfold it are a patchwork of vivid chestnut and dark ilex. Beyond the village that overlooks its charming valley, the road passes through a narrow rocky defile, and below lie Pino, on a barren rocky slope, and the sea. Borage was growing amongst the broom; and its blue is one of the most celestial, as delicate as *Gentiana vernalis*. There was a very curious plant near here, of which I only saw one specimen; a short, bulbous, obscene-looking object, bright crimson, and said by the chauffeur to be exceedingly poisonous. "Even the

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 104, 105.

goats do not eat it," he remarked, as though a plant that a Corsican goat wouldn't eat must indeed be something astonishingly maleficent.

At Pino I made a sketch and had an excellent lunch at the Hôtel Lotti, kept by an old military-looking man, whose waitress, thirteen years old Hortense, was as beautiful a child as I have ever seen, with dark wavy hair and clear grey eyes. Hortense served up the best omelette *aux fines herbes* I ever ate; and to show an adequate appreciation of its excellence I asked the old man if he'd made it himself. "No," he replied superciliously, "the fowls did."

This day I got quite tired of saluting the tricolour. We met no less than twelve motors, all flying the flag, and crammed with voters returning to their homes. The next place of interest was Nonza, perched on a huge rock above the sea, with wonderful terraced gardens overhanging vacancy.

Nonza is the most picturesque village of the north, built as it is on the summit of a high black cliff, whose precipices descend to the seashore. The houses, built into the rock, almost overhang the abyss. A steep winding path descends to the little *marina* far below. On every ledge of the steep slopes are tiny gardens, some but a few feet square, laboriously planted and tended with difficulty. An old tower crowns the summit of the great cliff, and was the scene of an heroic resistance in 1768, when assaulted by the troops of Louis XV. The commandant consented finally to surrender, with all the honours of war. The French troops, awaiting the garrison which had so stubbornly resisted them, were astonished to see, not a body of vanquished and weary soldiers, but one old man only, the Commandant Casella. "Behold the garrison!" he replied proudly, to the French Commandant's amazed query.*

* "The Scented Isle," p. 110.

In the little gardens grow vigorous citrons. The springs which water these trees come from the Fontaine Sainte-Julie, a young Christian Corsican martyred by the Romans. According to the legend, her murderers cut off her breasts and flung them on a rock. Immediately there sprang from them twin fountains that time has not diminished, and whose waters are held to be of miraculous powers.*

And then, after views of Ile Rousse across the bay, came the truly grand scenery of the country of St. Florent and Patrimonio, which perhaps is the most ideal for a home in all Corsica, Oletta not even excepted. There is all you can desire: sea, mountains, fertile vales, maquis, vast distances; without the savagery and melancholy that is so characteristic of Corsican landscapes.

On returning to Bastia I found H. had returned; and at dinner he gave a graphic and blood-curdling account of indigenous electoral practices.

We were informed, *mirabile dictu*, that Pozzobelly had actually sent a car and driver, not the ineffable Antoine; so we went to bed happy.

May 5th, Tuesday. The new chauffeur is Light Noel; a slim, ferrety-eyed youth with very passable manners. He turns out to be a much more careful driver than either of his predecessors. After breakfast we started off for Vescovato, a place which has produced more eminent men than any other single town in all Corsica. A leafy lane, very like England, diverges from the main coast road, and very soon you are in the tall, bedraggled town, surely the dirtiest and smelliest imaginable. We were taken to see the exterior of the homes of the Casabiancas, the Filippis, the Buttafuocas and of the historian, Filippini—all vast ichabods of former grandeur, stained, dilapidated, morose.

After luncheon in the gloomy and malodorous Hôtel

* "La Corse," pp. 228, 230.

de la Paix, we motored, under dull skies, up the steep ascent, amid chestnuts and ilex and bracken, and great flowering clumps of my new found *Lilium sexophyllum*, to Loreto, a village on the summit of a two thousand feet mountain, commanding large but dull views of the flat maritime plain between Bastia and Aleria. It has a campanile on a dizzy point and a curious crucifix, ornamented with the rays of the sun, the nails, the hands, the sponge and hyssop, skull and crossbones and an angel supporting all.

We chose a bad moment for visiting Vescovato, for the elections were going on. Bands of the rival parties paraded the streets day and night (mostly night!) shrieking insults at one another, and firing salutes into the air. The excitement reached a climax one night when a man was set upon by the opposite party and severely handled under our windows. The landlady, opening her window, shrieked "assassin!" at the top of her voice, and the friends of the unfortunate victim rushed to his rescue, the while he lay on the ground yelling loudly: "Je suis mort, je suis mort!"

There is a beautiful old convent at Vescovato, the walls of which grow yellow wallflowers, and not far away are masses of hart's-tongue fern. There were quantities of pancratium lilies growing in the chestnut woods, and pale green hellebore. The children and herds of the village make the most delightful flutes from the young shoots of the chestnut trees. The shoot (rather a substantial one) is soaked in water for a short time, then with a quick twist one can slip the bark right off it in one piece. A tiny mouthpiece is cut and inserted, holes cut to correspond in the bark (*sic*) and when blown upon these flutes give the most lovely clear notes. There used to be a half-witted herd who played far down the valley, the clear liquid tune rising from the woods like fairy music or the pipes of Pan.

After the destruction of Mariana Vescovato was for three centuries the seat of the Bishop (episcopus), and later the capital of the Casinca, one of the pièves or divisions of the province of Bastia. In the 15th century it was noted for its fine churches, houses and towers, and also for the games which took place—wonderful spectacles illustrating religious and secular history. The "Moresca" was performed there also, a sort of spectacular dance representing the taking of Mariana by Ugo Colonna.

The old houses of Vescovato hold many memories: there stand the dwellings in which were born the three great Corsican writers—Filippini, Monteggiani and Ceccaldi; and the great men of the Casabianca family. (Of these the most famous is the hero who sank his ship at Aboukir Bay rather than let it fall into the hands of the English—a deed which inspired Longfellow to write "The Boy stood on the Burning Deck." General de Casabianca was a senator and peer of France, and Comte de Casabianca was a minister under Napoleon III.)

There is the house offered to Jean Jacques Rousseau by the Count of Buttafuoco, and the home of General Franceschetti, where one summer evening in 1815 a starved and ragged man begged for admittance. That poverty-stricken beggar was none other than Murat, exiled from his kingdom of Naples. In spite of his disapproval of Murat's wish to reconquer his kingdom, Franceschetti, with true Corsican generosity, sacrificed all for his royal guest, lent large sums of money and later passed many years in prison because of him. When, many years later, Franceschetti, a ruined man, came to see Murat's widow, Caroline Bonaparte, she refused to return even a part of the money lent to her husband.*

May 6th, Wednesday. Before we went to bed last night, one of the ancient harpies of the house warned us to be

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 99–101.

sure to close our shutters, as there was certain to be shooting going on all night, and a stray bullet might easily find us. This did not frighten us greatly, but the night did not pass without incident. At 2 a.m. I was awakened by a violent shoving at my door and gruff voices were heard without. I shouted at the nocturnal marauders, and after more talk they moved away. I put my big knife ready to hand and went to sleep again.

My *Lilium sexophyllum* has been identified. The harpies with one accord acclaim it as St. Antony's lily, whose fête day is the 13th of June.

We take the road for Corte, *via* our now old friend Ponte Leccia, and see a troupe of villagers, about forty strong, with dozens of tricolours, returning triumphantly homewards with an enormous tree, from which the national flag was destined to float. Our raising of hats and "Vive la France" were received with cheers, to which we adequately replied.

At breakfast a detestable lout from Marseilles kept up a continuous stream of nasal rhetoric, declaiming against the vices and brutality of his political opponents, who were all doomed to perish in Hell.

The spitting, calico-spatted orator of Vescovato was not destined to be the only public speaker who was to shriek us to death this day. When we arrived at the Hôtel Cyrnos we found a weird scene in progress. Under a tree opposite its door stood a motor lorry surrounded by a mob of children, headed by four small girls with incipient bobs, where the youthful chauffeur was arguing with an old man, garbed in stained fustian, who at Rome might have earned a fortune by sitting as a model for Apostles in the studios of Via Sistina.

His eloquence was indubitable, but as his speech was couched in the rudest Corsican, we could not understand its purport. The children, trained in the Ponte Leccia

Primary School, evidently appreciated his oratorical talents and yelled applause, the chauffeur punctuated it with rude remarks. We asked Noel for an explanation. It appeared that the old man was living up to his apostolic character. He was asking for charity, exclaiming in effect, "silver and gold have I none" but, as he was displaying at intervals a greasy bundle of hundred franc notes, reputed to be six in number, his veracity was more literal than real. This the bystanders commented on, and suggested that he should air his eloquence somewhere else. For a moment he seemed inclined to obey their orders. He retired into the greasy alley into which the slops of the hotel are thrown at moments when the front is full of motors, and returned looking more like a St. Peter than ever burdened with a gruesome sack whose contents would no doubt have seemed a nightmare to a London rag picker.

His appearance excited terror in a small child who laid a rosy cheek against her sister's knee and roused the tongues of her elders. The old man replied with a torrent of language which H. would have liked to have translated, but was informed that it would raise a blush on his cheek. The old man rose to even higher flights of frenzy, and literally obeying the evangelical commands, not only shook the dust of Ponte Leccia off his feet, but flung a coin at the chauffeur's head who returned it with redoubled force. The old man evidently thought it time to move off and proceeded on his way towards Corte objurgating, and after haranguing the poetical if fever stricken individual, who with the air of a Corsican Lamartine or Byron presides over the local post office, and cursing a cat who was evidently attracted by his unsavoury bundle, he strode off down the avenue, followed by a crowd of jeering infants who pelted him with dust and, at length, knocked his sack off his back. The apostle's patience was exhausted;

he raised his hand aloft and overwhelmed them with horrid curses.

H., who is fond of Biblical allusions, was reminded of a well-known scene in Elisha's life, and remarked that it was perhaps lucky that the Corsican Fauna does not include she bears. The episode would have rejoiced the heart of a film designer. The old man proceeded on his road, and we, reflecting that he would have to traverse at least four weary miles before he fell in with a public, went up the stairs to the well-remembered dining room of the Hôtel Cyrnos with a good appetite to enjoy our trout and omelette.

May 7th, Thursday. Left the hospitable Hôtel du Nord, vastly superior in solid comfort to the pretentious Hôtel du Parc, where bathrooms are kept locked and genteel Madame assigns you a room, puts your baggage in it and then says you can't have it, after all. (But I did.) Mademoiselle, the hostess, who fancies herself an old woman at twenty-eight, is cheery and helpful; but her brother, who is both proprietor and waiter is noisy and gives himself airs. Master Berliet now lacks the upper half of the windscreen; Antoine broke part of it in his wild career to vote, and Noel had prudently removed the rest. The result is a decided draught.

The agricultural implements of this country are curious. A spade is the ace of spades, and at the same time the very deuce of a spade. It is about two feet long and two feet broad, tapering to a point with a thick handle five feet long, without any crosspiece. Whereas a plough is a gimcrack affair of wood, with a solitary wooden handle, which the ploughman carelessly fingers with one hand; the sort of thing a child could carry on his shoulder.

Our objective to-day is to conquer the Col de Vergio, which defeated us not long ago, taking the famous Scala di Santa Regina on the way. Outside Corte the country is yellow with hawkweed, and back up the road to Bastia

we go as far as Francardo, and then turn west up the magnificent gorge of St. Regina, which for wild grandeur is unsurpassed in Corsica. The road clings to a precipice dotted with a lovely white saxifrage; below gleams a green and frothy torrent; the colossal granite pinnacles tower sombre and naked to the empyrean. Some goats, frightened by the car, dashed up a steep and dislodged several large stones, which fell noisily in the middle of the road in front of us. If they had fallen into the car someone would have been hurt.

"At Ponte Castiola—or Pont du Diable—the Devil suffered a defeat. In those days no bridge existed over the rushing river. Saint Regina, wishing to help a pious cavalier who had invoked her aid on the farther side of the stream, offered herself, body and soul, to the one who could build a bridge during the night. At her despairing appeal the Devil appeared and straightway set to work. Towards dawn the bridge stood finished, and the Devil came to claim his due. 'Every good artist signs his work,' said the saint. The Devil, filled with pride, began to carve his name on the centre stone of the bridge. Near by was a fowl house and the saint entering, gave the cock such a kick that he immediately began to crow, at which the Devil, baffled, disappeared." *

We lunched well off trout and omelette and carrots at a common-place spot called Calacuccia; the waitress was an extremely refined-looking girl from Carrara, who spoke not a word of French; Anna is a worthy addition to my list of delectable maidens encountered in these parts.

Calacuccia furnished us with an object lesson in the uses and abuses of Corsican gutters. What his canal is to the Dutchman, the gutter which runs down his village street is to the Corsican peasant. It accompanies him in his cradle, very probably it contributes to lay him in his grave. By our hotel ran the gutter, and whilst one of the

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 165, 166.

hotel servants was laying out on a window sill a pair of stockings lately washed, which she was turning and returning with the loving care usually reserved for Brussels lace or Venice point, an old labourer was soaking an ancient piece of sackcloth in the gutter near by, kneading it in his hands and displaying it proudly to his wife. Reminiscences of the Ponte Leccia vagrant rushed into our minds, and we were not edified when a gentleman, emerging from the hostelry, proceeded, after placing an empty bottle on a cask standing hard by, to wash his hands and face farther down the stream.

Wine has been known to be watered. Was it possible that water from that gutter, which was the playground alike of fowls, cats and children, had found its way into the bottles on our table? The thought appalled H., who had found the red wine somewhat heavy. Our own belief is that the gutter in many Corsican villages provides all the water used alike for drinking and for washing, and it can hardly be said that the practice is one which would recommend itself to a conscientious sanitary inspector. We have not, however, learnt whether such officials exist in the Corsican mountains.

We were also interested by the appearance of a friendly, if thin, bulldog, whose ownership seemed to be a matter of doubt.

Walls increased and multiplied as we neared the Pass and our driver informed H. that they were of considerable antiquity and that they dated from ancient times, when their construction occupied the leisure of those who had nothing else to do, although they had often cost more than the value of the properties which they were supposed to enclose. We were delighted to receive local confirmation of the views which we had already formed on the subject.

Our hostess told us the first motor had crossed the Col only yesterday, so we are in luck, as it turned out, we

found six or seven inches of snow close to the track, but there was room enough for our car to pass. Certainly the drive up through the tremendous forest of Valdoniello is impressive to a degree. The great blotched boles, almost exactly the colour counterparts of the granite rocks they shade, rise straight and bare for a hundred feet; above the meagre vivid tops meet as an emerald roof, and no shrubs or flowers grow on slopes perennially in gloom. So we sat on the summit and looked west to Porto and the sea, and east to the long snowy ridges; there were silver birches growing there, the first we had seen. The slope down to Evisa opens out some of the most terrific precipices conceivable. The granite falls almost sheer for at least a thousand feet. But we left Evisa, of fleaey memory, on our right, and ran down to Vico, a town set in the middle of a great ring of hills, beautifully wooded. The hotel, des Gourmets et de France, held out a flattering prospect which, alas! was not fulfilled.

"In the valley is Vico, a charming red-roofed village, lying under the rocky height of the Sposata (1429 metres). One of the great rocks on the summit resembles a peasant woman on a horse. Once upon a time in the forest of Libbio, there lived a peasant girl of wonderful beauty, with whom the Seigneur of the Cinarca fell madly in love. After the marriage the bride, having ransacked her home and taken everything possible, departed with her noble bridegroom for her new home, without even saying good-bye to her aged mother. The brilliant cavalcade was riding along the ridge when the bride remembered that she had not taken the stick of the kneading trough. Quickly she dispatched a rider to fetch it. The old mother, hearing approaching footsteps, thought that her daughter, filled with remorse, was returning.

"But when she learnt that, not content with having taken everything worth having in the house, her grasping daughter must even have the paltry stick of the kneading

trough, the old woman was filled with anger, and, stretching out her arms towards the distant girl, cried: 'Ah, if you could but remain there with all your cavalcade!' And her wish was fulfilled, for the bride, turned to stone, stands there still, the symbol of ingratitude." *

May 8, *Friday*. Was woken up at 3 a.m. by the most appalling din. Thousands of belled sheep and goats filled the narrow street with clangour; and, to crown all, a cart with the most ungreased of axles drove them onwards. The moon was shining; and through the lace curtains the village loomed, pale and fantastic, like scenery in a theatre.

There are some very fine magnolias here. Our hooter went wrong, and we drove down to Sagone in dangerous silence, but fortunately without disaster. There we had a puncture, the fifth in two days; but the time of waiting was not wasted, for I had the good fortune to encounter Major Clarke, D.S.O., late of the 12th Lancers, well known as a pioneer in Central Africa and New Guinea. He told me of his pearl-fishing off the coast of the latter, diving thirty feet with the aid of a big stone, and of the terrible torture he suffered coming up, and afterwards, owing to the pressure. His ears bled for three days, but both the shells he picked up contained a pearl, one of which he wore in his tie.

He told me, too, of the "jumping trees" in that island—solitary trees frequented by cock-birds only, who rise up and down, fluttering their wings, whilst the hens dip round in an admiring circle. Clarke was most horribly smashed up at Arras, and was unconscious for twenty-two days.

The mauve cistus was everywhere in bloom along the dulcet littoral between Cargèse and Piana; and the aces of spades were hard at work in the little gardens.

We stopped at the Rochers Rouges Hôtel at Piana,

* "The Scented Isle," pp. 151, 152.

close to the famous ruddy needles. On the whole, this is the best hotel in Corsica. In the afternoon we drove down to Porto, to get another glimpse of that charming bay and its groves of walnut and poplar. "By jove!" exclaimed H. at one point, "I never imagined there'd be snow as low as this," and pointed to a large white patch, covering about a quarter of an acre. However, it turned out to be the village washing, or, more grammatically, the washing of the village; so that the Pianists are evidently either a very clean or a very dirty race.

We found a new flower—pinkish foxgloves.

May 9, *Saturday*. The Rochers Rouges harbours a polyglot lot of travellers. Females predominate; some are painters, some botanists, some both. Mrs. Archer, mother of the authoress of "The Scented Isle," is here. Also a Mr. Heron, of Edinburgh, who tells me that my St. Antony's lily is a *Pancratium*. There is an absurd individual who wears a soft white Byronic collar spread wide over his coat, a large V-shaped opening at the bosom gives him a strange hermaphroditic air; he has a shock of untidy grey hair, a draggled moustache, and a persistent stare. He looks rather like a very dishevelled cricketer who has donned somebody else's jacket. He has a son, the exact replica of his sire, except that the younger Apache sports plus fours and green stockings, above moth-eaten shoes.

We strolled down the road after breakfast, and H. had the fright of his life. He was about to pick some saxifrage, when a two-feet viper raised its head and shot out a long tongue. H., screaming: "Madonna Santissima!" ran half a mile. We met a procession of *bronche*-bearing damsels, headed by an old man on a donkey playing a large concertina; we received the impression of some devout ritual. The music was soft and pleasing, quite the best I ever heard emanating from so detestable an instrument.

Mr. Heron kindly lends me Thompson's "Flowering Plants of the Riviera," which is also a practical guide to the Corsican flora. I find our crocus is *versicolor;* our lily *Pancratium maritimum;* and a broom-like shrub I found the other day is *Calycotome spinosa*. The handsome lilac thistles are *Galacites tomentosa;* and the tall spurge, *Euphorbia dendroides*. Although there are three distinct white cistus, the learned botanists can do no better than to style the mauve form *albidus*. The gladiolus is *segetum*. It is a curious thing that this beautiful white *Pancratium* has not, so far as I know, been put on the English market; it is every bit as good as any narcissus. Of course, we have the larger form, but this one is just as lovely, and ought to be fifty times cheaper as well as easier to grow.

May 10, *Sunday*. To the Corsican, two things are sacrosanct: bathrooms and butter. Both are rare gems; both are kept locked up; neither are parted with except with extreme reluctance; both are reclaimed at the earliest possible moment. Yesterday, at 7 a.m., I asked the skimpy youth who calls himself the valet to open the bathroom. "Oh, I can't possibly do that," he replied; "it is engaged four deep; you can have it at ten o'clock, if you like, or to-morrow." I replied that unless he got it open at once I would send for the manager. Of course, it was opened at once, and so far as I could tell no one else wanted it. H. asked for it, but was put off with the usual excuses, and took them lying down.

So with butter. It is never put on the table, but if you ask for it it is generally forthcoming, and you are graciously permitted to eat it with your *hors-d'œuvres*." But watch it carefully now, for with the sardines and the olives it will vanish as sure as fate. And, though you be so nimble as to retain it during the fish, before the omelette comes it will have disappeared as though by magic. I fancy the waitresses have a sneaking kindness

for butter; but I exonerate them from any such human weakness in regard to baths.

Our last evening at Piana was not destined to be a tranquil one. If Corsica is a land of perfumes it is also a land of noise. The only difference is in the causes of the clamours. In the present instance Belgium supplied the performers, and though a Belgian Kermesse may seem very picturesque when seen on the canvas of a Teniers or an Ostade, we were destined to learn that the reality can be just as ear-racking as the screams of a Megoera of Bastelica or the election merriment of a Vescovato mob.

The tourist agencies which interest themselves in Corsica have, it would seem, to be particularly industrious in circularising Belgium, and with apparent success. Just as we returned from Porto, a large carload of middle-aged and ageing trippers drove up from Ajaccio, and we soon found the salon filled with merry revellers.

The sunset over the Gulf of Porto was lovely, but the eager eyes of those who stood in a bay window overlooking the sea were not turned towards its glories, but to a broken-down roulette board with which a spectacled gentleman without a cloth to assist him was endeavouring to explain a game which he apparently understood only in theory. In front of the hotel, on a spot which commanded a good view of the walls sustaining the road, was set a table covered with bottles containing every kind of appetiser known to French middle-class humanity, and a crowd of thirsty souls, including ladies of the kind who in England would, with difficulty, be persuaded to take a sip of some particularly alcoholic if nauseous cordial, were doing their best to send the dust they had swallowed on their way from Ajaccio, down their throats with Niagara-like rapidity. The dinner bell resounded, and the drinkers rushed to the dining hall to take their places round a table ladened for the feast, under the protection of an elegant if melancholy-looking gentleman who

seemed to double the parts of a waiter and of the guide, philosopher and friend of travellers who had left their native burghs for the first time. At the end of the board was a chair on which sat a Pekinese dog, carefully held by a leash tied to the wrist of a lady, whose dark hair and eyes and brilliant complexion reminded us that traces of Spanish blood are not unknown in the Belgium of to-day. Near her sat her husband, a distinguished-looking if undecorated man, who looked like a Court Chamberlain, but who probably presides over the deliberations of a Parish Council in rural Brabant. His next neighbour was a lady who, if she had been fifteen years younger, might perhaps have sat as a model to Rubens' pupils, but who, as things stand, is amply qualified to play the part of the jovial landlady in a Christmas number. She atoned, however, for the loss of youthful beauty by the volubility of her utterances and the loudness of her tone. The rest of the company were much of the same type, the village doctor, the village notary, possibly the village grocer, were represented, as were their various spouses, and the mixture did not give one a very attractive idea of social life in a Belgian country townlet. For a moment silence prevailed whilst the vermicelli soup was being hastily gulped down, but with the advent of the *langoustes* from the Gulf of Porto, pandemonium seemed let loose. Money was apparently plentiful amongst the party, and most of its members to be eager connoisseurs of wines. The wine list at the hotel is a long one, and I should think that during the evening every one of its items must have been sampled.

We might wait and starve, counting the minutes which elapsed between the departure of our soup plates and the advent of our omelettes, but though five waitresses and waiters were thought a sufficient staff to attend to the wants of thirty-four guests, they left most of the other diners to stare at their empy plates, whilst the glasses of

the Belgians were never left unfilled, and the opened bottles were carefully removed before half of their contents had been consumed. We reckoned that fifteen different kinds of wine had been served to them before the champagne, which was provided by the munificence of the rural burgomaster, made its appearance, yet the opening of the bottles was greeted with as much joy and shouting as if they had been thirsty travellers who had just reached a Saharan well. The glasses were solemnly clinked together, and the roof rang with their yells, whilst the *passée* Rubens' beauty tried to scream down the country doctor and at least three of his neighbours who were engaged in a somewhat heated argument as to the merits of some Algerian resort.

More champagne was brought and consumed, whilst we waited for our carrot stew and shrunk back in despair from some beef which might well have served to make the harness for an artillery horse.

The conversation at the Belgian table became Rabelaisian, and we were much relieved when, at a given signal, the elderly revellers paired off, shouting and laughing more loudly than ever, to take their departure, whether for Ajaccio or for their night-quarters in Piana, whilst we wondered whether the various couples had sorted themselves out correctly.

Other social problems filled the room, for our next neighbour, a gentleman with the torso of the Apollo Belvedere clothed in a sweater which would have delighted Tartarin of Tarascon, was sitting with a lady with eyes surrounded with two inch broad circles of black set in cheeks marbled with white lead over lips flaring with rouge. We were very interested in discussing the fair dame's nationality and occupation, and finally came to the conclusion that she had probably at some time or another kept a boarding house for young ladies in her native city of Buenos Aires, and was probably, at the present time,

pursuing the same calling in some more or less fashionable quarter of Nice. Her thirst for liquors was at least as keen as that of her Belgian neighbours.

At last the noise was stilled, we satisfied our appetites with cheese, strawberry puffs, and some excellent oranges and raisins, and departed to our rooms more convinced than ever that intending novelists might do worse than take a trip to Corsica to search for characters. It would be an agreeable change from their somewhat hackneyed haunts in the winter sports centres of the Oberland.

For the last time we thread the rosy needles of Piana, past the life-like dog's head rock, and swoop down through the foxglove-dotted maquis to smiling little Porto, with its eucalyptus dark against bright poplars. Then comes fifty miles of curling road along the high mountain contours to Calvi—fifty miles to cover, less than twenty as the crow flies. There is an exceedingly decorative tree hereabouts, with pinnate leaves of purple and light green, very like the castor oil plant. Passing under some low-growing trees a branch hit H.'s very fast bowler to the boundary; the bowler was unperturbed; not so his captain. A frightened goat leapt thirty feet off a rock on to the road in front of us; it fell on its knees and was nearly run over. We speculated as to our feelings if it had waited another second and landed on H.'s neck. I declined to say that I should not have laughed.

The Calvinists, as befits their austerity, have an austere climate. A fortnight ago it was raining and thundering, and to-day it doth likewise. We passed the rocks where immortal Nelson lost his eye, and gloomy Calvi burst upon us in all its hideous beauty, as H. would say.

The fat proprietor of the Christophe Colomb received us with that admixture of restrained sorrow and assumed affability which is his chief characteristic. He is a pessimist, but a philosophic pessimist; the world is a bad, sad

place; but he did not make it. He sighs lugubriously and promises you an excellent omelette. Groaning and muttering horribly he waddles to a sideboard, and with a cut-and-dried smirk presents you with a bottle of *Cap Corse*.

There is one article of diet which Corsicans adore, and eat on every possible occasion—that is *langouste*. They prefer it to lobster and ascribe to it all sorts of imaginary virtues. H. has been completely converted to the popular view, and in his French of Stratford-atte-Bowe, goes everywhere asking for "long goose." He seems immensely pleased if now and then they bring him a high fish instead.

From Calvi to Ile Rousse there is about fifteen miles of uninteresting country, except for the flowers. Marigolds in the waving barley; dark violet campanulas amid the grass; the mauve cistus a riot of pink and gold beside the road; white cistus grizzling the hill slopes; everywhere there is something of beauty. Ile Rousse itself is a considerable place on the sea, with splendid avenues and a gigantic hotel (*de la Poste*), which is cram-full. There is a mole and a considerable business activity. It is Joan of Arc's fête day, and the town is full of holiday makers.

Ile Rousse, which gives its name to the place, is a yellow ochre island joined to the mainland by a causeway. It is the yellowest island on the face of the waters; and the man who christened it the Ruddy Island must have been colour blind. The beach smells nauseatingly; but I forgave it on finding there a splendid deep-yellow poppy, like a tulip, with crinkly glaucous leaves.

"Of 1500 inhabitants, it is a flourishing port, and base of torpedo boats, the centre of the commerce of the Balagne, founded in 1758 by Paoli, to counterpoise Calvi and Algajola, still faithful to the cause of Genoa. When the first houses of this new-born town began to rise above their foundations, the liberator of Corsica, prophesying its future prosperity, exclaimed: '*Ho piantato le forche*

per impiccar Calvi' (' I have planted a stronghold whence to take Calvi ').

" Ile Rousse ought to be called Paolivia, from the name of its founder; it was for a short time called Vaux, from the name of the Marquis de Vaux, who completed the conquest of Corsica. The products of the olive trees and of numerous fruit trees, notably the citron, orange and lemon, with the export of olive oil, constitute an important branch of the commerce of Ile Rousse."*

The assiduous waiter at the hotel delivers a disquisition on the *cédrat*—that puzzling fruit which no foreigner, not even the dictionary, seems to understand. The latter translates it as " lemon "; but it is vastly larger. The waiter says it is vastly nastier also; not even a goat will eat it, it is so bitter and tough. It has to be soaked in sea-water for weeks; it is exported in sea-water to which salt is added; it is rendered incredibly saline in order that eventually three pounds of sugar should be added to every pound of *cédrat*.

Thus it becomes " candied peel "; of great price, much eaten by Germans and Americans, and not unknown to English confectionery. I suppose we should call it " citron."

The road from Ile Rousse to St. Florent, where we lunched, passes through the desert of Nebbio.

At St. Florent we had about the worst lunch I ever remember trying to eat, in a small dark room invaded from the street by half a dozen immense dogs, whose long tails swapped fleas with one's trousers, and who regarded high sardines with pathetic interest.

And then, in tropical rain, we went through Nonza on its rock and Pino of culinary fame, down the lovely sylvan vale of Luvi to Santa Severa of unhallowed memory and so along the coast road and its belt of yellow flags to Bastia, and our five weeks' tour in Corsica was at an end.

* " La Corse," p. 175.

THE HISTORY OF CORSICA

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COLONY of Phocæans from Asia Minor are the first inhabitants of Corsica whom history mentions; they, or the Carthaginians who succeeded them, founded Aleria, which when Rome conquered Corsica became Roman, and new cities were built by Marius at Mariana, and by Sylla at Aleria.

On the division of the Roman power Corsica was attached to the eastern empire, and so continued till A.D. 460, when the Vandals under Genseric conquered it; after their expulsion by Belisarius it continued a dependency of the Greek empire, as part of the Exarchate of Ravenna, until 750, when it was taken by the Saracens. These were finally defeated early in the ninth century by Charlemagne, and Corsica was granted to Boniface, Count of Tuscany, whose descendants for some time governed the island.

About the year 1000 a succession of feudal lords became the rulers of Corsica, but in 1077 these were opposed by the people, who rose against them and gave themselves to the Popes; and in 1081 Urban II transferred the sovereignty of the island to the Bishop of Pisa.

The Republic of Genoa protested against this act, and in 1133 Innocent II divided the Corsican bishoprics equally between Pisa and Genoa, an arrangement which by no means pacified the island, and the two Republics continued to make it their field of battle until, in 1347, the contest was ended by the capture of Giudice della Rocca and the defeat of the Pisans, when Corsica fell

under the yoke of the Genoese, who thenceforth held it for 400 years.

The government of the Pisans in Corsica was mild and just; that of the Genoese is, on the contrary, accused of having been always the opposite; nor do they appear ever to have been regarded by the Corsicans with any feelings but those of hatred.

Early in the fifteenth century Alfonso of Arragon claimed the island as having been granted to Spain by Pope Boniface VIII; but the Spaniards were defeated in 1541, and the French, who had intervened, evacuated the island in 1559, leaving Genoa its sole mistress. The oppression and cruelty of the Genoese were such that the islanders revolted from them in 1564 under Sampiero of Bastelica, and after this rebellion was put down the Republic governed Corsica with unchanged severity until 1729, when, under Gaffori and Ceccaldi, an insurrection broke out which led ultimately to the defeat of the Genoese and their final withdrawal from the island.

Genoa then solicited aid from the Emperor Charles VI, but the troops he sent were defeated by the islanders, and in 1732 a peace was signed between the two parties, of no long duration, since war again broke out in 1736, when the Corsicans chose themselves a King in Theodore, Baron von Neuhoff.

In 1737 the Genoese were again obliged to call for assistance, this time from the French, and the war, on the part of the Corsicans against them and the Republic of Genoa combined, continued until 1741, when the island submitted once more to the Genoese, and the French quitted it.

Soon, however, under Gaffori and Matra, and later under the great Pasquale Paoli, the Corsicans once more rose against their oppressors and succeeded in nearly wresting the island from their hands, except some of the fortresses, which at that time Genoa made over to the

French. Paoli, meanwhile, who ruled the interior of the island from 1755 to 1769, continued to make war on the Genoese, and by degrees dispossessed them of their hold in all parts of the island, when the Republic, finding itself everywhere completely beaten, entered into a secret treaty with Choiseul, Minister of Louis XV, by which all Genoese rights over Corsica were formally transferred to the French nation.

This was in 1768, and thenceforward the French fought with Paoli and the Corsicans on their own account alone. Ultimately, after several reverses, they completed the final subversion of Corsican liberty at the battle of Ponte Nuovo, May 9, 1769.

From that time the French Supremacy has been acknowledged in Corsica, with the exception of the short period 1794–1796, when, after some troubles, during the period of the French Revolution, George III of England was proclaimed King of Corsica, a sovereignty which lasted for two years only.

Since 1796 the dominion of the French has not been disturbed, and from that date the peaceful progress of the island and of its population, once so divided and harassed, has been gradually developed.

WITH A COFFEE PLANTER IN THE MALAY PENINSULA

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IT was on the ninth of January, 1896, with the thermometer at 86° in the shade, that I went on board the paddle steamer *Thai-ping* lying in Penang harbour, in company with her gallant skipper, Capt. Menzel. As we sat at dinner *tête-à-tête* in the little deck saloon with the punkah slowly waving over our heads, and a couple of China boys anticipating every want, I learnt from the modestly told story of the captain's life what stuff the men who build our Empire are made of. By birth a Dane, in 1864 his paternal acres came under the sway of the German flag; but a change of nationality must have mattered little to this citizen of the world, who has spent his life in the service of civilisation.

Adopting the sea as his profession, he has visited every region of the earth. "It is easier for me to tell you where I have not been than where I have been," he said in reply to a question of mine. For his distinguished services in promoting trade, improving navigation and exploiting industries he holds high orders conferred by the crowned heads of Denmark, Sweden and Siam; and the number of ships he has commanded and the different sea routes he has traversed are beyond the power of memory to recall.

What interested me chiefly, amongst the thousand ups and downs of a chequered life, was the story of his speculation in Burma. Knowing the vast potentialities, mineral and agricultural, of the east of the province, Capt.

Menzel applied to the British Government for a concession; and was rewarded by a grant of six hundred square miles—the largest tract ever accorded at one time to one man. But the local authorities knew their man. "I am thankful to be able to say," said the captain with a proud flash in his handsome eyes, "that I have never failed to carry through any enterprise that I have embarked upon."

But the difficulties in this case were herculean. The country was a mass of tangled jungle, infested with malaria and savage beasts; the natives, apathetic and almost useless as labourers, and, to crown all, the very man who should have been the captain's right hand—the district official—was his chief opponent in every step he took towards the opening up of the country. (I refrain from giving this individual's name, because he has been removed in disgrace to a spot so pestilential as to warrant the devout supposition that he is now beyond the reach of vituperation.)

"I have had to do with dozens of officials of every nation," said Capt. Menzel, "and have never before experienced anything but the most courteous and kindly treatment." It is reassuring for an Englishman to learn that this scoundrel was an Irishman. One instance will suffice to give an idea of the villain's methods. To get the jungle cleared, the roads made and the mines worked, Chinamen had to be imported at great cost from the Straits. The heathen Chinese coolie under British rule is as dependent on his daily opium for sustenance and comfort as a babe upon his bottle, and even more offensive when he can't get it. The official saw that if he could make the Chinese rise and murder Menzel, his way would be plain before him. Accordingly, he locked up all the available opium securely on Government premises, and he went away up country with the key in his pocket, taking care to let the Chinamen know beforehand that

Menzel was to blame if the stock of opium ran short. The Chinese believed that Menzel was to blame, but, curiously enough, they didn't murder him. For the captain had doctored them when they were sick and given them back the first profits of the tin mines, so that he seemed to them as a second Confucius for wisdom and discrimination.

A Chinaman is not particularly squeamish where human life is concerned, but he is never guilty of the short-sighted folly of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs; unless, of course, the goose belongs to his neighbour.

When the official returned he was surprised at not meeting instalments of Capt. Menzel in the village street, and proceeded to devise fresh schemes for his destruction. To cut a long story short, this worthy one day obtruded himself on the captain's notice, and the sight of his tormentor was too much for Menzel to bear. He called the cowardly ruffian a blackguard, a scoundrel, and a liar, and told him to come on and fight. But though the challenger was fifty-six, the Irishman, with admirable prudence, declined the unequal contest, and Menzel settled the business by sending unimpeachable proofs of his official misconduct to headquarters, whereupon he was summarily removed. Since that time everything has gone well; the mines are paying; immigration has begun; commerce and order have taken the place of poverty and rapine, and Captain Menzel, after a huge expenditure of capital and in the face of countless difficulties, has the satisfaction of knowing that six hundred square miles of the earth's surface owe to him their initiation into the ways of prosperity and peace.

The whole tale is an instructive commentary on British methods and British results. The whole secret of our Imperial policy is commerce; we acquire because we civilise and open up, and the enormous areas opened up in the name of England owe their extent to the fact,

first, that we allow individuals a free hand in all matters that concern their enterprise untrammelled by the shackles of red tape, secondly, because we impose no duties on the fruits of that enterprise.

The same can be said of no other colonising power. It matters little to us that the exploitation of an unknown tract has been accomplished by a Dane, for it is England that takes credit for it in the eyes of the world; it matters a great deal to the Dane that England allows him to deal with the soil and the natives almost exactly as he thinks best (so long as he commits no injustice), and that no prohibitive tariff sucks the life-blood out of his profits.

England attracts the best men of every nation to labour for their own advantage and her glory under the British flag. And Capt. Menzel is a fine specimen of the metal attracted by the lode-stone of British liberty; handsome, active, bold, kindly and indomitable. It will be an evil day for the Empire and the world if ever a little England policy and closed ports should drive such men as he to look to another than the mistress of the seas for the inducement to bring out of darkness the hidden places of the earth.

By this time it is half-past eight and passengers come crowding on board, for the *Thaiping* gets under weigh punctually at nine. There are half-naked Tamils from the east coast of India—picturesque fellows, with long black wavy hair streaming down their backs, who comprise, with the Chinese, the two great sources of labour in the Straits; Chinese coolies differing in no respect, save a tendency to discard superfluous clothing, from their brethren in Peking and Canton; and lastly, but with all the importance of first class passengers, half a dozen or so of the members of the Perák cricket team, who are returning from a Christmas holiday week in Singapore. Most of them are officials in the Government service, and they think about as much of taking a sea trip of 1500

miles for a couple of matches as a county team would of going by the G.W.R. from Paddington to Gloucester.

Singapore is the Lord's of the East; there, Hong Kong meets Ceylon at the wicket; there, too, Shanghai and Perák measure their strength and skill. These cricketers are most of them excellent fellows, but they occasionally make things lively for the Singaporeans in a manner disapproved of by serious souls. One loquacious member of the local bumbledom waxed very eloquent on the subject. "I'm very fond of cricket and all that kind of thing, you know," said he, "but really these cricket weeks upset the whole place. Why, if you'll believe me, some of them, a short time ago, actually had the impudence to paint the Governor's bungalow red in the night, and put a paper collar and a dressing-gown on Sir Stamford Raffles' statue!"

I repressed a strong inclination to laugh, and assured the worthy luminary of the bench that such conduct appeared to me extremely reprehensible.

Seeing that two of the cricketers were proceeding to go to bed on mattresses spread on the seats of the saloon, I hastily secured the remaining bunk and with great interest watched one of them divest himself of his clothing and put on a *sarong* of most artistic colour and workmanship. The sarong is the native Malay garment and makes an excellent night-dress or bathing costume. Many of them are made of silk worked with gold thread, beautifully cool and comfortable. The garment reaches from the waist to a point about halfway between the knee and the foot—a perfect cylinder of cotton and silk, the same breadth the whole way down. When I first saw one I came to the conclusion that the Malays must be men of enormous girth, but at that time I didn't understand the secret of putting them on. The way they are fastened is at once simple, ingenious and efficacious. You get inside the cylinder, pinch the stuff between the first

finger and thumb near the right hip at the required pitch of tightness round the waist, extend the remainder with the left hand near the left hip till it lies flat on the body, double it back, and finally tuck in the top between the body and the first surface.

That is the way most women in Malaya fasten their sarongs; the men have another plan. They gather up the loose part of the garment into two long ears between their fists, in such a way that the extension of the ears produces a corresponding tightening of the sarong round the body. When the sarong is sufficiently tight they cross the ears one over the other, and then cross them back again the reverse way, finally tucking that part of the sarong next the body over the kind of knot they formed. This fastening has an advantage over the female method which will at once commend itself to modest minds; it cannot be undone by a sudden jerk.

A short time ago I paid a visit to a native prince—His Highness Sri Adika Raja—who was kind enough to get me a large selection of various kinds of sarongs to choose from. Each State has its distinctive work; Perák itself makes but few, and those only of the cheaper kinds; Kelantan is noted for the brightness of the products of its looms; and an expert can at once discriminate between the silks of Selangor and Pahang.

What strikes a Briton most, perhaps, is the curious resemblance of many of the sarongs in design and colouring to Scotch tartans of the Gordon type. This may be attributable to Manchester influence, but I believe it is merely a coincidence. I commend the fact to those persons who delight in the tracing of origin.

The Scotch and the Malay both wear kilts. Therefore they are both descended from the lost tribes. Therefore Moses wore a kilt. Such a syllogism would reflect credit on the average lost tribe theorist.

I was awakened from an uneasy slumber on the planks

of the *Thaiping's* deck (whither I had been forced to betake myself for coolness) by a most prodigious din, partly caused by the mighty vociferations of the captain, partly by the squealing of countless pigs, and the clucking of innumerable hens. The facts were that we had arrived at Port Weld; that another steamer had taken our proper moorings, and that the crew were getting the cargo on deck. This was about 5.30 a.m. At 7 a.m. the train for Taiping started. (There is a charming want of finality about the spelling of Malay place names.) The boat I came on is called the *Thaiping*, the place itself is generally known as Taiping, but many people write it Taipeng. Again, Penang is the official spelling of the island of that name, yet the local paper calls itself the *Pinang Gazette*. If spelling can't go wrong in Malaya, the same cannot be said of pronunciation. Woe to the man who pronounces a final K! To speak of Perá(K) as Perak is to proclaim oneself a stranger or a boor.

I was surprised to see what a long train came into the station, and more so to observe the large number of the native population who use it. The word "native" in Malaya is apt to be misleading, however. Most of the fluctuating population is composed of Chinese and Tamils (or Klings), and for every Malay one sees perhaps ten Chinese and five Tamils. This is due partly to the vast number of Chinese and Tamils who act as labourers in the Straits, and partly to the fact that the Malay, who is naturally intensely indolent, prefers eating the plantain and smoking the cigarette of idleness at home to foraging about in quest of work or play.

It is an interesting fact that Perák alone, I suppose, among the States of the world has built about one hundred miles of railway out of current revenue, without the loan of so much as a dollar. This prosperity is due chiefly to the tax on tin which is produced in annually increasing quantities; thirty thousand tons was the output last year,

from a country about the size of Wales, together with Monmouthshire, of which about seven-eighths is still covered with forest and jungle.

The twelve miles from Port Weld to Taiping, the capital of Perák, was accomplished in about half an hour. Taiping is a distinctly prepossessing little place. The roads are laid out on mathematical principles, are splendidly made and beautifully kept, and bordered on each side with shade-giving trees. I may at once say that the roads of Perak are the admiration of all who behold them. They are numerous, hard and smooth, and there is no particle of exaggeration in the assertion that better roads cannot be found in England or France.

Abundance of labour, abundance of limestone rock, and the patient toil of the Indian oxen, which drag the heavy rollers over the new-laid metal, are the factors which supplement the skilful engineering of the head of the Public Works Department, Mr. F. St. G. Caulfeild, to whom we appealed for breakfast.

The rest of Taiping is as neat and well-kept as the roads. The houses are either of glistening white, two-storied and verandahed, or else of reddish wood with palm thatch—all dotted down in the greenest of green gardens, kept radiant by the heavy afternoon rains, wherein purple bougainvilleas, yellow alamandas, and gleaming white gardenias make a perennial feast of beauty.

This, of course, does not refer to the whole of the town; it does not refer to the Chinese quarter nor the fish-market. If there is one odour more offensive than another I think, perhaps, it is the smell proceeding from a fish-market two degrees north of the Line, where several hundred Chinese and Tamil coolies are gathered together. Some persons may be disposed to award the laurel to the scent of the decomposing prawns which every Chinaman tops up with; they both can be enjoyed to an unlimited extent in Taiping.

One characteristic sight in Taiping, as in other Perák towns (if town is not a misnomer for places no bigger than an average English village) is the Chain Gang. I do not wish to impugn the morality of the children of the Flowery Land, but certainly, as far as I have seen, by far the vast majority of the prisoners in Perák are Chinese. I may have been unfortunate, for I believe statistics go to show that the Chinese are, in proportion to their number, the most law-abiding of the three nationalities: Malays, Chinese and Tamils, who compose the population of the " Straits."

These poor fellows tramp along with spade and shovel and earth-basket on their shoulder, and leg-irons clanking round their calves, fastened two and two together; while a huge Sikh policeman with a truncheon in front and another with a loaded rifle behind, both accurately got up in turbans, khaki tunics, breeches and putties, and (alas, the incongruous) bare feet continually remind the celestial wrongdoers that safety does not always consist in flight.

Does my lady at the Residence require a new tennis court? The Chain Gang will remove mountains and make the wilderness to blossom as the rose. Does the District Magistrate want his water-tubs filled? The Chain Gang will walk several miles under a broiling sun with pure water from the well to minister to His Highness' pleasure.

One morning in the rest-house at Kuala Kangsar I was in my bathroom, about to empty the stone arabesque hogshead of water dashed over the body with a bucket which constitutes the Malayan bath, when I was immensely surprised by the unceremonious entrance of two manacled celestials, who regarded me, as I thought, with expression of ominous import in their obliquely twinkling eyes. Hastily noting the position of the door, I put on a bold front and began interrogating the male-

factors as to the object of their visit, in a tongue palpably foreign to them. After about a minute of this a Sikh policeman came up and relieved the tension by summarily beating my friends over the head with a truncheon; whereupon they departed without so much as remembering to leave their pasteboards.

It turned out that it was the duty of these men to fill my bath tub; the policeman was a little way behind; the Chinamen didn't know how to act under such embarrassing circumstances; the policeman, by the use of his baton, intimated that they ought to have known better than to intrude upon a bathing gentleman. A Chinaman can't see through a wooden door any better or any worse than a Sikh, but policemen are not considerate.

The presence of roads and Sikhs and State engineers is in truth an anomaly in Perák. Without going into the history of the Protected Malay States, as Perák, Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan and Sungei Ujong are collectively called, it is interesting to bear in mind the fact that a former Sultan of Perák invited the British Government to interfere in favour of law and order in his dominions; accordingly soldiers and Civil Servants were sent out and the whole fabric of administrative and executive government was reared at the expense of the State. But the Sultan disliked some of the innovations. Accordingly he was deported to the Seychelles. Then there was an interregnum which was terminated by the British authorities placing the present Sultan on the throne.

Thus, by an elaborate and costly figment, which at the same time deceives nobody (I suppose there is not a full-grown Malay who does not appreciate the real position of his nominal lord, the Sultan), the old idea of the spontaneity of the Sultan's anxiety for the foreigner is bolstered up, while the "protectors" make and unmake at will the potentates they are sent to protect.

With reason does Mr. (now Sir) Henry Norman, in

his excellent book "The Far East," head his chapter on the Protected States, "Anomalies of Empire"; anomalies they are and will remain, until the expensive farce of puppet-making is brought to an end and the Malay Peninsula is included in the Empire of the Queen.

Nobody who has not seen it can realise the pitifulness of the farce now being enacted in Perák, the one in which the Sultan plays the chief part. The stage is contracted, the properties tawdry, the actors uncertain, the audience meagre and apathetic. The chief reason for this is the simple and luminous fact (showing clearly the clue by which the curtain may be let fall) that the actors are in a position which they do not know how to fill. There are plenty of Malay Rajas and Dabohs with claims to the supreme position in the country, almost, if not quite as good, as those of the present ruler before he was set up.

These gentlemen (and gentlemen they are in every sense of the word) live quiet country lives, hunting, fishing and seeing their friends, with perhaps an occasional pilgrimage to Mecca to obtain the coveted title of Hadji. They hold no court, they indulge in no pomp, their houses only differ from their ryots' in size and cleanliness; some of them are well qualified to dispense the measure of justice entrusted to their keeping by the foreign (English) Government.

One cannot help thinking that his Highness, Raja Sir Muda Bris, K.C.M.G., Sultan of Perák, would be much happier as one of these *primus inter pares*, if he so desired, than as the nervous sovereign of a country not ruled by himself, living in a palace that is not Malay, and yet is certainly not European; dressed in clothes foreign as well to his own notions of beauty and comfort as to those of all who behold him; aping the English manners and ways and not achieving them; taking the seat of honour in the presence of the man who could dethrone him by a nod. There is a vast amount of moral degradation in-

volved in all this, and for that humiliation the English Government is responsible: for with a title, a ribbon, and two thousand dollars a month they have converted a self-respecting independent Malay prince into a political morris-dancer dressed up in clown's attire to be the laughing-stock of a whole people.

The other day I had an opportunity of seeing a court pageant, and I am glad I did not miss it, for it furnished food for weeks of laughter. The occasion was the installation of a new *mountrie*—an officer, I was told, corresponding to our Prime Minister; but if ever there was an analogy which ought to crave permission *parva componere magnis*, this is the one. Some idea of the divinity which hedges this eastern King in the estimation of his subjects may be gathered from the fact that though my breeches and gaiters were muddy with the clay of the paddy-fields in which I had been snipe shooting, my genial host, whose mare was fretful at starting, declined to allow me time to make any change in my garments and himself attended the august function in a pair of knickerbockers and stockings.

I suppose few people have gone to tea with a monarch in a pair of muddy khaki riding breeches; it is an innovation in the theory of court etiquette committed with an impunity I am the first to deplore.

The Sultan's *astana* (or palace) is to the houses of his subjects as a white elephant is to a pony; it is a thing large, grotesque and rarely seen. It is dumped down on the top of a hillock, of a colour intended originally to be white, but which, through some dire mischance, has assumed that bluish tint which linen shirts acquire in the process of washing at the hands of unskilful women; square and high, it is honeycombed with large windows flanked by green venetian shutters, and the effect is that of a huge doll's house or a child's picture of the edifice erected by Jack.

By the time we arrived the show had already begun. There was a small crowd of Malays outside the porch—no Chinese or Tamil coolies were admitted within these sacred precincts—surrounding the Sikh band, and through these we had to push our way towards the entrance to the palace. Then, on the hall steps, we saw the object of our quest.

A rather nice-looking Malay of about twenty-five stood with bowed head on the bottom step, while above him on the steps stood an aged and toothless priest, muttering from a scroll of paper which he turned over and over in his hands as if he was continually losing his place and didn't know where to find it again.

Suddenly he said something which caused an attendant functionary to seize a bunch of leaves, dip them in water and sprinkle them over the bare head and fine new suit of the official elect. But this metaphorical purging, in a land where corruption and bribery, lying and treachery, are the commonplaces of official rank, was by no means considered sufficient. After a little more hocus-pocus from the toothless priest, that ancient worthy desisted from his mumblings and retired behind the scenes, while a satellite came forward with a freshly-gathered plantain leaf and held it over the *mountrie's* head. In a few moments the priest returned with distended cheeks, and before I had half begun wondering what on earth was the matter with his face, he discharged the whole contents of his mouth in a great stream over the plantain leaf, so that it bedewed the young man's hair and soaked the clothes on his back. Then a shower of rice descended on the unfortunate Premier's head and the first part of the ceremony was over.

The Prime Minister retired as gracefully as the circumstances permitted to change his clothes; the Sultan and his guests went from the portico upstairs to the large reception hall, and the band began to play.

Following the crowd, I too went up the steps and found myself on a landing overlooking the band, immediately in front of the open doors of the hall, through which I could see everything that went on inside. Close to me was a Malay gentleman of the name of Kulup (every other Malay you meet is called Kulup), with whom I had several times gone pig-hunting, and I was interested to observe the look of amused contempt with which he regarded the whole piece of mummery. The hall was a room about 70 ft. by 50 ft., with two columns of pillars enclosing a central aisle at the end of which was a throne, with two chairs stuck on either side of it. Large windows opened out on either side of the room, which was painted the nondescript colour of the outside of the building, and the sole attempts at mural decoration consisted of two shocking bad mirrors framed in bad gilding, stuck at an elevation of about 25 ft., and leaning inwards at an angle of about 45 degrees, on either side of the door behind the Sultan's throne, which opened out on to the sitting-room of the ladies of the harem.

The Malay spectators squatted on each side of the central aisle; the Sultan sat down upon his throne and the Resident of Perák and Mrs. Birch took each a chair alongside the Sultan. Then the second show began.

The half-fledged Premier came in clad in a dry suit of clothes of magnificent material and accompanied by a bear-leading functionary of a great presence, who read out sundry proclamations to which nobody appeared to listen, in a tone of vast importance. Lots of people conversed audibly at this juncture, which greatly irritated the pompous master of the ceremonies, who called for order in stentorian tones.

When the reading was done the real fun began. The Prime Minister got as far from the Sultan as the nature of things permitted, and then began to approach him in the most marvellous manner of progression, I suppose,

ever adopted by a biped. He did not walk and he did not go on all fours, neither did he crawl on his belly, nor yet kick himself along on his back. But his mode of locomotion seemed to partake somewhat of each one of those four different kinds. He squirmed and he writhed and he wriggled and he convoluted, until at last, amid breathless suspense, he arrived (I imagine quite blown) in front of the throne. There he took a kris * from his girdle, presented it to the Sultan, and the Sultan shortly afterwards returned it to him. Then the full-fledged Premier, armed with the badge of office, squirmed backwards till he got to what the portly man considered a respectful distance from the Sultan; and there he was permitted to get on his hind legs and walk away.

Thus ended the installation. But there were more treats in store. The Sultan extended a gracious invitation to the Europeans present—about six men and as many ladies—to accompany him to tea. Accordingly we followed His Highness round the throne to the door which led out behind it on to a landing at the head of a flight of stairs. This room was full of furniture which still smelt of the warehouse, and lamps still decorated with the label describing their prices, virtues and anatomy; hung with bits of pink string round their long brass stems. Here, too, was assembled the whole galaxy of the harem—an awful sight for unbelieving eyes to gaze upon. A precious ugly lot they were, taken as a whole.

The Malay woman is usually fat, her face is round and expressionless; her mouth large and thick-lipped; her figure cumbrous and her conception of a waist rudimentary. If they wore stays and more clothes some of the younger ones might possibly be called pretty.

From a brief inspection of the beauties on the landing,

* A kris is a Malay dagger. It is about a foot long, usually made in a wavy line, like a corkscrew. It is carried in a polished wooden sheath.

I followed my host into the dining-room beyond, where tea was already laid out in ordinary European fashion. The dining-room was bare of furniture, like all the other rooms except the landing, but it possessed one noticeable feature which at once riveted a stranger's attention. This was the peculiar architectural plan of making the doors of six or eight bedrooms open on to the dining-room. All these doors were wide open, as though inviting us to admire the novelty of brass bedsteads and clean mosquito curtains.

Not content with the dubious publicity afforded by a door which foolish persons might perchance prefer to keep shut, this Oriental architect had given each bedroom a large, low window, also opening on to the dining-room, which effectually and finally solved the question of privacy and gave permanent and concrete expression to the old theory that a cat may look at a king, even when he has got his nightcap on.

What the architect's original idea was it is unsafe to predict; but one can easily imagine that the apparent difficulties of the situation have their countervailing advantages. Perhaps the Sultan, when he has overslept himself and is a bit late for breakfast, glancing furtively forth upon the feeding court and perceiving that unless some vigorous measures are taken he will come in only for the dregs of the coffee and empty *makan** dishes, attracts the gaze of the assemblage to his towel-clad form by a sudden roar of "Abdullah, easy there with those eggs! And you, Hamid, if you touch another spoonful of curry I'll have your greedy head whipped off!"

We had just sat down to tea, and the ladies were in process of forcing themselves to attack some most horrible candy-like and strong-smelling tea, together with the sweetmeats which the Sultan pressed upon us all, resembling nothing so much as garden slugs wrapped in cab-

* *Makan* is the Malay word for food in general.

bage leaves, when a chorus of female screams was heard from the landing, and everybody rushed out to see what had happened. It turned out that one of the tall brass lamps, shade, price-label and all, had been knocked down, but, curiously enough, no part of it was broken, and the gentle denizens of the harem were soon restored to their normal equanimity.

Thankful for this diversion for breaking up the tea-party, I escaped with another man down the stairs into the room beyond the porch wherein the ceremony of installation had taken place, for here was an excellent billiard table which we proceeded to make use of in all the abandon of shirt-sleeves and tobacco.

But five minutes sufficed to collect a hundred gaping Malays about us, who buzzed with wonder and admiration whenever a ball went into a pocket. Some of the " get ups " of these fellows were very comic ; one officer of the palace carried an execution *kris* about two feet long with a jewelled hilt in a golden sheath—a weapon priceless in its beauty, rarity and costliness ; but he saw nothing incongruous in surmounting a fine silken *sarong* by a decayed, buttonless, old tweed coat that a Mile End dealer would be ashamed to have amongst his stock.

Another high official swaggered about with all the confidence begotten by a dirty woollen vest, which no doubt appeared to him to be a sure passport to the sympathies of Western civilisation.

Suddenly we were invaded by the Sultan, in the full glory of black " greaser " trousers (as we used to call them at Eton), military jacket, and K.C.M.G. and forage cap stuck full of pale blue and white feathers, and the whole train of visitors ; so that the balls I struck failed to go into the pockets and the wondering populace buzzed no more.

" How very pretty your wife is ! " remarked the lady whom the Sultan was then honouring with his conversa-

tion; referring, I presume, to the only one of the wives who could by any stretch of imagination be called pretty according to the European interpretation of that term.

"Yes," replied the Sultan meditatively; "but did you notice what a tremendously big stomach she's got on her? However, she'll be rid of all that in two or three months!"

It was said *bona fide;* a merely commonplace bit of Oriental small talk, and fortunately the lady addressed had lived too long in the East to feel any inclination to blush.

Then the thunder boomed and the rain came down in a way that made the wretched *ghari* * horses tuck their heads and tails between their legs, and the last thing I saw as I left the *astana* was one of the Sultan's relatives, a broken-looking individual, carrying a dirty white cotton umbrella, begging the loan of a few dollars from the District Magistrate.

Undoubtedly Perák is a very fascinating country. The great wonder is that in England so little seems to be known about it, for here, of all places under British Control, is the proper field of the colonist with a small capital behind him. The country is hilly, with peaks rising as high as seven thousand feet,† all wooded to the very summit, with fine timber trees from which the orchids wave. The climate is healthy (I speak from six weeks' personal experience), the thermometer rarely rises above 90° F. by day or 76° F. by night, and rivers of good water are abundant. Except for the paddy-fields and plantain plantations, along the flat river valleys beside the roads, with here and there a few isolated holdings dotted amid the waste of trees, the whole country is a mass of uncleared forest jungle.

Consequently, land is cheap. It can be obtained from Government now at the rent of fifty cents (half-dollar,

* A *ghari* is the two-wheeled cab of the country.

† Babu is 5420 feet.

the dollar now exchanging at 2*s.* 1½*d.*)* per acre per annum, on a lease of nine hundred and ninety-nine years; whereas uncleared land in Selangor, a more fashionable locality, is selling at anything over three dollars an acre.

The greater portion of the soil of Perák is a strong holding yellow clay, often twenty to thirty feet deep, lying on a bed of granite rock, from which tin is to be obtained in very varying amounts. Scattered over the face of the land are huge solitary limestone formations, some almost mountains in size, the water-washed remnants of a past geological age. Pondok, overhanging the village of Parang Rengas, is 1800 ft. high and three-quarters of a mile long, with white sides falling sheer on every side from green clad summit to green clad base.

Geological details are superfluous; it is sufficient to remember that though some of the soil of Perak is yellow and some of it is red and some of it is brown; it all grows Liberian coffee equally well. The best elevation is between five hundred and a thousand feet, though much is grown successfully at higher, and some successfully at lower, elevations than this. The returns from coffee growing in Perák read like the fabulous profits of the old gold mines.

Young Englishmen crowd in hundreds to Ceylon—a country now agriculturally old, where land is constantly sold for a hundred pounds an acre, and where disastrous experience has proved the ruin of thousands.

Why do not men with a little money look a few hundred miles further east and book their passage to Penang instead of Colombo? They can buy land for a shilling an acre in Perák, and as much of it as they like. I have compared the returns from the few estates now in bearing in Perák, and from them I find that the average yield of coffee per acre is about five *piculs*,† which at present price

* This was written in 1896.

† 1 *picul* = 133⅓ lb.

means over two hundred dollars per acre, or rather more than £20.

The average cost of bringing uncleared land into bearing is about £10 (100 dollars) per acre; so that the return (after six years from the date of planting, *i.e.*, when the coffee has arrived at maturity) is at the rate of two hundred per cent. on the original outlay.

Given a capital of £5000, which is sufficient to bring five hundred acres of jungle into full bearing as a coffee estate, and at the end of six years that estate, if it has been scrupulously weeded and drained, will bring in a gross revenue of £10,000 a year, of which £8000 at least will be clear profit.

That the average of 5 piculs ($5\frac{3}{21}$ cwt.) per acre is an extremely low estimate will be seen from a comparison of the return from various estates published in a circular by the Government of Perák, which, being desirous of encouraging agriculture in the State, draws attention to the existence of large areas of virgin land available for both hill and low country cultivation.

The returns are as follows:—

1. Linsum estate, in Sungei Ujong: average per acre for four years in full bearing, $9\frac{1}{2}$ cwts.
2. Silian estate, in Sungei Ujong: average per acre for three years in full bearing, $10\frac{7}{10}$ cwts.
3. Weld's Hill estate, in Selangor: average per acre for four years in full bearing, $8\frac{4}{5}$ cwts.
4. Batu Caves estate, in Selangor: average per acre for one year in full bearing, $11\frac{1}{2}$ cwts.

After the initial expenses of clearing and planting, the only constant outlay consists in weeding and picking, plus the salary of a manager. It is this latter item which makes a hole in profits, however able and vigilant the overseer; and the more able and the more vigilant he is the more he has to be paid. But woe to that estate whose manager

is in intellect a child, or who belongs to that class of persons (alas, only too numerous in the tropics) who, by reason of the frailty of their mortal natures, cannot always stand upright. It is the question of management that makes the tempted visitor pause before investing.

But no such doubts need appal the intending colonist. His own manager, he need pay nobody to neglect work that requires only common sense and constant supervision to be successful.

The pioneers of the industry have already borne the burden and heat of the day, and those who come after have only to avoid the mistakes which experience has defined. Given residence and a decent modicum of attention to agricultural and financial details, and in six years from the date of his landing in Perák the capitalist of £5000 ought to be drawing £7000 a year. This is not exaggeration, but the language of statistics. The only danger the investor has to fear comes from his fellows.

The Malays have already perceived the easy profits derivable from coffee, but so far their poverty and inherent indolence combined have prevented their bringing more than a quite insignificant area of land under cultivation. The Chinaman, too, has got his weather eye open; and some of these men, by reason of their great wealth and power of attracting cheap labour, are dangerous rivals to greet in the market-place. But as yet it may be truly said that the vigorous hard-headed English colonist, with capital from £1000 upwards, has only to come, see and conquer. In ten years from the time he leaves home he may hope to be back there again with a liver almost, if not quite, as small as it started, leaving behind him an estate in full bearing and splendid order, and rejoicing in the delightful certainty of a comfortable, perhaps princely, income for as many years as he can live out of nine hundred and eight-nine.

Besides the fun of making lots of money, life in the Straits holds out many charms. There are dozens of race-meetings held at Penang, Taiping, Kuinta, and, in short, wherever two or three English officials are gathered together throughout the peninsula. Under the auspices of the local club the novice may subscribe four hundred dollars for an Australian "griffin," * and enjoy the double sport of training and running him. The thing is a lottery; the horses comes over straight from Australia in a batch and are drawn for: you may get a clipper, you may get a screw. Whatever happens, you have got a well-bred beast that you can hack about or drive twelve miles an hour in a gig.

If the colonist be a sportsman—*i.e.*, one who delights in the tracking and slaying of wild beasts—he will find plenty of *kanonenfutter* in the jungle. He will do well to bring out a ten-bore and solid bullets, with perhaps a 500 express and an ordinary twelve-bore to complete the armoury. There is splendid snipe-shooting in the paddy-fields in the autumn, and majestic elephant is common in the north of the State. But you have to get a pass from the Sultan to shoot him. Nine feet six is a big elephant in Perák, for here they never attain the size of the larger Indian species.

It may be of interest to some sportsmen to know that three times the circumference of his foot-print invariably gives an elephant's height at the withers. But a finer beast than the elephant is the lordly *sladang*. A friend of mine tracked and viewed a bull which he pronounced to be nineteen hands high at the shoulder. These beasts are huge cattle, the old bulls' coats are short and of a glossy blackness; their horns are large editions of the American bison's, and between the horns hangs down a shaggy torrent of hair a foot long.

There is something peculiarly noble and graceful about

* An untried horse.

these huge beasts. They are fine sport, too, for a wounded *sladang* almost always charges, and then the betting is about level.

The other day a Malay laughed at an Englishman because he couldn't kill a *sladang*. The Malay went out to try his luck; he never came back. His body, crushed almost past recognition, was found in the jungle. The *sladang* had won.

Of tigers there is no end. The other day I had occasion to drive from Kuala Kangsar to Padang Rengas along the high road. I passed a certain point at about 6 p.m. At that very time, within two hundred yards of where I sat in my *ghari*, a tiger was making a meal of a Malay *ryot*. The unfortunate man was returning home through his own paddy-field when a tiger sprang out and killed him. The brute bit off the man's left leg close to the body, and retired with it.

The previous week, within five miles of the same spot, a tiger had killed and carried off a Malay woman. Her body, very slightly mutilated, was found in the jungle. Local opinion cannot decide whether it was from motives of chivalry or repletion that the striped gentleman went no further.

Yesterday (February 15, 1896), I was walking homewards up the hill on which my host's coffee-estate is situated. There are two paths: one through the jungle, the other over the clearer hillside, amid the white-flowered coffee shrubs. I wanted to go through the coffee; my companion stuck out for the jungle and the shade. "Think," said he, "we might see a tiger, or at least a panther!" I had no gun, and the suggestion failed to arouse my sympathy. So we went the way I wanted to go.

But the true word is often spoken in jest; perhaps more often than in earnest. Behind us we saw a familiar face; it was that of the stalwart Vytie, a Tamil coolie who thinks nothing of walking thirty miles a day with seventy

pounds on his head under a tropical sun. Of course he took the jungle path; the coolies all do; for coolness' sake. Shortly after we got to the bungalow we heard a great commotion in the region of the kitchen. Vytie had returned, scared almost yellow. He said he was walking along with the mutton tied to his back and with the basket containing the bottles of coconut toddy on his head (fermented coconut milk is used in the place of yeast in bread-making in the East), when all of a sudden he came on a tiger, who turned round and wagged his head at him. With characteristic *naïveté* Vytie proceeded to tell us that he chucked down the basket and the bottles and ran as hard as he could down the hill. But get rid of that infernal mutton he couldn't; it was tied so tight to his body. After a bit he stumbled across a Malay wood-cutter, and together they returned to the dreadful place. There they found only the marks of both tiger and toddy, for the latter, being uncorked, had run away almost as fast as Vytie himself.

That same evening biscuits did duty for bread, and a huge bonfire glowing between the cattle-sheds paid tribute to our belief in a coolie's veracity.

So there are plenty of tigers if only you can get them. Most people adopt the plan of tying up an animal, usually a goat, in the locality frequented by a beast, and then sit on a platform (called a *machan*) erected between a couple of trees, about 15 feet up. If you kill the tiger this way it is but poor sport; if you don't, it is the monosyllabic appellation of the ultimate destination of the incorrigible unrighteous.

I once spent from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. on a surface 4 feet by 3 feet 6 inches in company with a Malay gentleman, two rifles and about three billion mosquitoes, and I never wish to repeat the fun. We had tied a kid up in front of us to attract the prowler, and the cries the poor little animal made were like those of a frightened child. I

never felt such a beast in my life as I did then; and was quite glad the tiger never came to kill her. In the morning the whole of my body was red with mosquito bites, and the irritation throughout the dreary night was indescribably awful. To make my temper worse my Malay friend persisted in smoking cigarettes all night long, and at the same time declined to desist or give me any. I couldn't argue with him for two reasons: one, I should have made a noise; and the other, I couldn't speak his language and he couldn't understand mine.

Such is tiger hunting, or else a spring, a crack, and a sudden fall. It is not the sport of kings pursued thus; rather is it a kind of sporting Fenianism, which delights in unsuspected volleys from inaccessible hedges at the dead hour of night.

Of other game there is plenty. Rhinoceroses are very common; they are small compared with the Indian variety, but take a lot of killing, and tracking them is fine sport. Then there are the pretty little *Kambing gran* or Malayan antelope; with black horns curved back, much like the ibex. *Sambhur*, the common species of deer, which many persons know as elk, can be got by a morning's walk.

Perhaps some of the best fun out here is to be had pig hunting. Most people keep a bobbery pack: pariahs, *sakei*-dogs,* and every conceivable product of extravagant crossing. These hunt the long grass and rout out the tuskers, and the music of their tongues carries their masters back in fancy to the racing meadows, where long ago the pied bitches swept to a scent breast high.

But a cruel edict, though perhaps a necessary one, has ordained that all packs of dogs must be shut up, under penalty of a heavy fine and the destruction of the offenders. For hydrophobia has been rife in Malaya, and several

* The *sakei* are the wild men of the jungle; the *ourang outang* of the human kind. They wear no clothes and use blow-pipes.

sad deaths have occurred. No less than 5820 dogs were shot in Perák in 1895—at least, so the official return says.

Sikh policemen are under standing orders to shoot every stray dog they see; and the result is not edifying. A common sight is that of one of these great bearded khaki-clad fellows smoking cigarettes in the shade of a Malay hut, while the dog he has been sent to destroy sniffs at the rifle he has chucked on the ground. Or else the policeman is very conscientious and is much pleased at securing a broken hind leg after the expenditure of ten cartridges and two days' hard hunting. The wounded animal is left to die at its own convenience.

Occasionally a stray dog is descried in the crowded street of a town; and then all the Sikhs turn out of the police station and keep up a dropping fire till the poor beast is hit, utterly regardless of the lives of the passers-by.

Consequently, the canine survivors have few social instincts and a dog-lover grows melancholy at the constantly recurring sight of tucked-in tails disappearing round corners.

One rather curious thing happened at a bungalow in which I was stopping. A Sikh had come to destroy a certain little black pariah; but the dog was too cunning to be caught; and after a whole day's waiting and watching and stalking and aiming, the man of war returned unsuccessful to his quarters. That same night the little black dog ventured incautiously within the haunts of the monkeys. There it roamed under the shaddock-trees, whereon the gibbering crew were wont to hold high festival. The monkeys accomplished what the Sikh had failed to achieve; they attacked the little black dog and slew him.

Hatred of dogs is as much part and parcel of a monkey's nature as it is of a Herefordshire bullock's; a tribe of monkeys will invariably assume the offensive against

an unprotected dog, and when they do they generally kill him.

But if one should write of all that there is interesting, curious and valuable concerning Malaya and the Malays, there would be no end to the books that should be written. My advice to everybody interested in the peninsula is that they should read Mr. (now Sir) F. A. Swettenham's "Malay Sketches." To those who desire to make money quickly, without the risks attendant on mines and speculations therein, I would say, take up 500 acres of land in Perák and plant it with Liberian coffee.

The peninsula is a gold-mine. *Si quid novisti rectius istis Candidus imperti ; si non his utere mecum.*

IMPRESSIONS OF SOUTHERN PORTS

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PERNAMBUCO is suggestive; Bahia is business-like; Rio is ravishing. At Pernambuco a flat shore and the all-surrounding forest combine to swamp the scattered town. The high white chimney of a cotton mill stands out against a dark green background; the tall masts of sailing vessels safely riding within the coral bar chequer the yellow and pink of towering warehouses: in front the surf thunders for ever on the reef; behind the forest hums with immemorial music. Olinda, perched on a headland to the north, is the home of the merchants; the soft pale colours—lemon, saffron and grey—of the houses of the tropics dot its wooded slopes. Bahia wears an air of human activity.

A narrow crescent-shaped track is covered down to the very water's edge with five-storied houses; the steep face of the cliff that hems in the foreshore is streaked with lifts and funicular railways; and above a second larger, breezier town looks down upon the glittering expanse of the bay of San Salvador. Bahia is famous for the number of its churches; there are sixty of them in a town no bigger than Hereford. In one of them we found a festival service proceeding. Standing reverently near the large open west door we were suddenly electrified by a burst of very secular music, and amidst the groups of kneeling negresses we perceived a band of frock-coated musicians. In the midst of the thunder of bassoons and bombardons a terrific noise was heard; the ladies of our party shuddered

and made towards the door; it was as though from every airt ten thousand battering-rams were assaulting the church. About to flee, horror stricken, we were as suddenly reassured by the entrance of a score of little grinning boys brandishing long sticks and revelling in the din. In another moment they had disappeared without, where the gigantic cymbals—the cause of our alarm—still crashed out their volleys, and now the urchins added a new terror to our situation by discharging fireworks. Rocket-sticks fell round us like hail; in our faces Catherine wheels buzzed and spluttered; crackers leaped between our legs; and above the explosions the great cymbals boomed and the plain clothes band fiddled and puffed in curious emulation.

It is thus that negresses are edified into good works. Close to the west door of the church, on the verge of the cliff overlooking the sea, stood a huge dark-leaved tree, with yellow, purple-centred, abutilon-like flowers.

The architecture of these Brazilian towns is that of Lisbon; the streets are narrow and cobbled, but fairly clean; mules drag trams; oxen, carts; small weedy ponies seem reserved for riding. The only attraction Bahia offers to its visitors is a drive in a mule-tram along the Rio Vermelho to a point some eight miles from the city, where a fifth-rate restaurant looks out upon a sandy beach, and rotting catamarans, like six quill pens sharpened at both ends and tied together to form a raft, are the playgrounds of crowds of dusky children.

The Rio Vermelho is beautiful only because it is outside Bahia. The tropical vegetation which flanks the execrable roadway is conspicuous neither for size nor colouring. A few pretentious villas in newly-planted gardens on the slopes of the ruddy hills look dreary and unhomelike. Scattered gardenias, hibisci and alamandas were the only flowers in bloom at the end of November.

But you must not go to Bahia for beauty. Enough that

here white men's honest toil conquers the lassitude born of the sweltering sunshine; that the quays are thronged with busy labourers, and that the counting-houses of the great firms, though within the thermometer stands at ninety till sundown, hold men capable of winning from the land the riches denied to its ease-loving children. If you want beauty, go to Rio de Janeiro.

I got up at half-past four to see the entrance to the harbour, and the sun got up at the same time to show it to me. To the right of the ship countless dim cones and peaks broke the undulations of the ghostly land; behind us the shimmering amaranth-glow grew paler as the rim of the sun rose above the waters. Slowly the nearer islands changed from the vague to living green; the misty opalescence of the far distance defined itself in jagged peaks; a huge black cone, pink-tipped by the rising sun, suddenly reared its gigantic head from the midst of the sea: it is the famous sugar-loaf, that guards the famous bay. As the ship steamed slowly on the blackness of the distant shores began to whiten with tiers of piled-up houses, and the opening bay disclosed hundreds of islands —green, rocky, hilly, and wooded—engulfed in the immensities of that colossal sheltered sea.

The secret of Rio's pre-eminence is her unique combination of grandeur and prettiness. Where Nature works on a very large scale the result is generally uniform; impressive and magnificent, but deficient in variety and expression. But Rio is like a Swiss scene magnified a hundredfold.

There are the same delicate contrasts of outline and perspective, the wooded knoll, the rocky crag, the abrupt valley, the suggestive distance lost against a towering mountainside: but at Rio the eye is not merely delighted with all this beauty; it is awed by its grandeur. Down to the water's margin, up the slopes of the hills, over the wooded knolls, far back towards the mountains has the

city crept and wandered, so that the gleam of sun-swept masonry is hardly ever absent from the view, and the vast range of the city harmonises with the magnificence of its home.

The architecture of Rio is Portuguese. Red-tiled roofs and warm-coloured walls keep their brilliancy for ever in this pure smokeless air, and from across the bay the city seems compact of marble palaces set in gardens. And though the place has such an evil fame for harbouring yellow fever (which is literally true, for the fever is bred in that great blue cesspool of a bay), there is nothing in the streets at which the most fastidious county councillor could turn up his nose. There is a lurking suspicion in the minds of most Europeans that a South American town is little better than a huge aggregation of wigwams, wherein tattooed Indians jostle timorous white traders off the sidewalks. These excellent persons would be astounded if they were suddenly set down in one of the principal streets of either Rio, Montevideo or Buenos Aires. They would perhaps say to themselves: "The shop-windows are the shop-windows of the Tuileries; the pavements are the pavements of Piccadilly; I have seen many houses as good as these scattered about London and Paris, but never in my life have I seen a whole streetful of them. What millionaire owns the place? For assuredly the bungling hand of a municipal authority has had no finger in this pie?"

Trees are planted everywhere; the yellow and vermilion mantles of the lovely *Entero lobium* gleam like flame along the boulevards, and every available nook is rampant with gorgeous flowers. The favourite trip of ships' passengers is by the funicular railway up one of the hillsides above the town to the International Hotel, whence the little line runs on, through a tropical forest, to the very summit of the Corcovado—a quaintly topped mountain that rises about two thousand feet above the bay.

Thence may be had one of those bird's-eye views which commend themselves, almost invariably, to mountain climbers, but in which other people with better taste or less activity see nothing but the murder of perspective and the death of beauty.

What would become of the loveliness of a woman's face if you were only in a position to look down on the top of her head? You would certainly see more of her; you would see both sides of her at once, and that is, I suppose, what the climbers want. But the grasping rascals, like the Princes of Aragon and Morocco, choose the wrong caskets; if they, like Bassanio, would be but content with the leaden one of the ship's deck or the foreshore they would find therein the picture that eludes them from the mountain-top.

However, for those who like quantity a walk to the Corcovado (for you can walk up too, but very few people want to) is no bad thing. The bay stretches miles and miles inland towards the thin spires of the Organ Mountains; countless wooded islands are dotted over it; they say there is one for every day in the year.

Fronting you is Petropolis, across the water from Rio, where the Legations are, and where the rich merchants have their dwellings, on slopes cooler and healthier than any near the great city. Below you are the little forts which guard the narrow mouth of the harbour, and the pointed, leaning cone of the sugar-loaf is near them. These forts stand very much on their dignity, and frequently stop vessels by firing a shot across their bows.

If the ship won't stop they put a bullet into her, and though they are very bad shots at anything over a hundred yards they generally manage to hit at fifty. When the ship is properly hove to the fort signals some such fustian question as "Where have you come from?" and "How long did you take on the voyage?" to which the imper-

turbable British skipper returns a mendacious answer and goes on his way rejoicing.

For it can be no concern of the sanitary authorities at Rio whence come the ships that hoist the yellow flag inviting the port doctor's visit. It would be thought finical on the part of a gang of colliers to insist that a newcomer must show an absolutely clean face before admittance to their grimy company. Yet the authorities of this city, swarming as it is with the most gruesome pestilences known to science, take the greatest pleasure in putting a healthy, cleanly British ship into quarantine for the crime of having touched at a foreign port. They seem jealous, do these Brazilians, of their own particular brand of yellow fever, and resent the introduction of bacilli calculated to undermine the virulence of the native article. In Brazil you are nothing if not a millionaire.

The coin of commerce is the *milreis*, or "thousand reis," which is worth something more than a shilling.

The visitor is appalled, on the conclusion of a modest lunch, to find that he has eaten and drunk ten thousand coins at a sitting. But the impression of extravagance soon gives way to one of illimitable opulence, and with fifty pounds in one's pocket feels ready to tackle Mr. Pierpont Morgan himself.

One cannot repress a smile at the first sight of Monte Video. Sebastian Cabot, who first discovered these coasts and sailed up the vast estuary of the River Plate, was a Venetian by birth, although by domicile an Englishman. For months and months he and his mixed crew had seen nothing but the flat alluvial plains that fringe the giant river. One day they put out to sea again, and suddenly the man at the look-out cries in his Venetian dialect: "Monte Video!" (I see a mountain!). But what a travesty of a mountain! It cannot be an inch more than a hundred feet high, and the long, gradual slopes of its base make it appear even more insignificant than it

really is. The place recalls perhaps the most ignoble chapter in England's history—a chapter, by the way, omitted from most of the history books.

In 1806 England and Spain were at war. Spain had been coerced by Napoleon and her fleet had been beaten, as well as the Corsican's, at Trafalgar. Englishmen still hankered after the fabulous El Dorados of the Spanish South American colonies, and such a one was Commodore Sir Home Popham. After taking, by order, the Dutch Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, he set out on a little private venture of his own. He sailed his fleet of five men-of-war and five transports quickly up the River Plate to Buenos Aires, and landed sixteen hundred men under the command of General Beresford. The colonists made little or no resistance; they hated their Spanish governors for a variety of reasons, of which not the least was the damage done to their trade by its monopolisation by Spain. The British captured £300,000 worth of gold, and Sir Home Popham sent it home to London with a request for reinforcements. The city celebrated this unofficial victory with bonfires in the end of June, 1806. A few weeks later, in August, the little force in Buenos Aires was attacked by four thousand determined men under Captain Santiago Liniers, a Frenchman in the employ of the Spanish Government. Beresford, after a bloody fight in the chief Plaza of the city, retired to the fort and held out until he had lost half his men. Then he surrendered, after stipulating that he should be allowed to march out with all the honours of war. But the Spaniards broke the spirit of their contract: Beresford and his men were scattered in small parties up and down the country, and held in bondage as farm labourers by malignant *estancieros*.

Early in 1807 the British Government sent out reinforcements under Rear Admiral Sterling and Sir Samuel Auchmuty. An attack was at once made on Montevideo, and that town was taken by assault after the ships

in the harbour had battered a breach in the walls. But it was a desperate fight. The Spaniards repaired the breach with sacks and hides; the night was dark; the British for a long while could not find any practicable opening. The story of the gallantry of Captain Renny, of the 40th, and of Colonel Vassall, of the 38th, as they rushed in front of their men to meet the first deadly fire of the defenders, is the story of many another brave British soldier whose blood has won wasted victories.

When the Government at home heard of the loss of Buenos Aires they sent out a well-equipped force of 8000 men under Lt. Gen. Whitelock to retake the town, and with it that enormous tract of fertile territory which is to-day known as the Argentine Republic, and the richest country on the face of the earth. On Whitelock were conferred the title of "Governor General of South America," and a salary of £12,000 a year. It was the old, old story, ever new, of military incompetence in high places. Whitelock was very generally known to be the stupidest as well as the most conceited dolt that ever wore a general's uniform. But he possessed that grand ingredient of military success—court interest—in abundance; people whispered that he was a Georgian bastard. So out he came to South America with his cocked hats and his levees and his twelve thousand a year, and lazily set about betraying his comrades and dishonouring his country.

The story of his futilities is perfectly astounding. If he had been a five-year-old child or a madman he could not have bungled more hopelessly. First he landed his men in a swamp miles away from Buenos Aires, although there was known to be an excellent anchorage and landing-place close to the city. Next he kept his force for days in inaction outside the city they had with immense toil struggled up to, although he had ample information that the inhabitants were prepared to surrender without a

blow. When General Auchmuty made a suggestion the Governor General of South America told him to mind his own business; when a daring spy risked his life to bring a report of the internal state of the city, this proud scion of a royal house said he was sick and would see nobody. Finally, a small detachment of the force was ordered to march through parallel streets into the town; but they were expressly forbidden to take any ammunition for their muskets. They were to rely solely on the bayonet. The Spaniards barricaded the streets, got on the top of their houses, far out of reach of the British bayonets, and shot down our men like rabbits. There never was such a butchery before or since; but Whitelock refused to send either ammunition or reinforcements.

Sir Samuel Auchmuty had captured Retiro, high-lying ground where now a railway station stands, and from there he valiantly bombarded the town. The day had not been lost if that hidebound ass of a Commander-in-Chief had listened to gallant Sir Samuel. But no; he was a coward as well as a blockhead; nothing would satisfy him but surrender. The Mayor of the town, an astute fellow who guessed how the land lay, insisted in the Council that the terms of capitulation should include the cession of Montevideo. "No," said General Liniers, "that would only make the English desperate." "Never mind," said Señor Aizaga, "the proviso can easily be taken out if they object."

But the poltroon Whitelock did not object, and this is how England lost several million square miles of the most valuable part of the world's surface. Whitelock was not shot, as he ought to have been, but he was "cashiered and declared totally unfit and unworthy to serve His Majesty in any military capacity whatsoever."

No doubt he got some snug civil billet. But for a long time in England there was a toast drunk by patriots: "Success to grey hairs but bad luck to white locks."

We went ashore at Montevideo, and were speedily acquainted with the peculiar currency of Banda Oriental, or, as Europeans generally call it, Uruguay. The dollar here is worth about four and sixpence, and goes about as far as a shilling in England. A little dirty launch carried us two miles from the ship to the landing stage, and thence two of the crew carried me, since a recent operation prevented my walking, to an hotel three hundred yards away. The charge made for two passages and the portage was ten dollars, or about two pounds five shillings. After dinner our little party, which included a sub-lieutenant from H.M.S. *Grafton* and the Sandy Point manager of the Bank of Tarapaca, drove out in a smart victoria with two excellent bay horses to see the carnival. This function was being held in honour of the election of a new President of the Republic, and we were fortunate in thus happening on a most picturesque and amusing spectacle.

The chief streets of the city were brightly lit up; arcs of electric light spanned them everywhere and the brilliance of a southern moon helped to produce a light of exquisite mellowness, through which the dark crowds of spectators loomed like figures in a fairy masque. Everywhere were carriages, filing in slow procession; but what an incongruous assemblage! There were huge open vans filled with gaudily-dressed bandsmen blowing brass instruments with might and main below long repulsive sham noses; there were other vans crammed with girls in dominoes and classical draperies, to whom appalling gentlemen with hideous masks were paying the homage of admiration from the summits of bicycles; there were the voluptuous ladies of the city in their smartest evening dresses, looking very languishing and lovely; there were equestrians on high-stepping horses, skew-bald for choice, with white saddle cloths decorated with a dark monogram, white evening shirts and waistcoats, white breeches and butcher boots, crowned with billycocks, and evidently

well pleased with themselves; there were red-breeched Zouaves guarding the Hôtel de Ville, and dark-coated white-plumed gendarmes directing the traffic on horseback; there were seventeen-hand horses dragging triumphant cars full of grinning satyrs, and infinitesimal ponies, flashing from browband to crupper with electricity, drawing miniature victorias crowded with vociferous children. The pavements were blocked by a stream of humanity petrified with wonder; the balconies above held groups of smiling women; the bands crashed out their thunders; little boys sold bouquets of heavily-scented flowers, and round and round the pepper-tree-fringed boulevards the procession struggled through a paper sea.

The amount of coloured paper in the streets of Montevideo that night was a thing to marvel at. These serpentinas are thin strips of stiffish paper, about ten yards long, rolled up in circular form. Ten cents will buy three dozen of them. The masquerador holds the loose end in his left hand and throws the coil with his right, which unwinds as it flies and entangles the dear object of attack in harmless toils.

This is the fun of the fair. All is cheery and bright on the surface.

Beneath, things are very different. Riots are raging; revolutions are planning; no man can be certain of his future even for a month.

Under the rule of Spain and Portugal South America had enjoyed three centuries of peace; but when the Mother Countries fell into Napoleon's hands South America unexpectedly won its independence.

Its citizens had had no training to fit them for the task of self-government. They fell into anarchy.

But for the Revolution of 1688 England might have shared the same fate. When, however, Reform became a necessity, Englishmen had already enjoyed for three generations a certain measure of autonomy. Religion

still influenced their minds. The effects showed themselves when the time came for the changes which marked the beginning of the last century, and consequently we must look kindly on these Dagoes. We who live in a perpetual state of grumbling at the fancied inaptitudes of our own Government can hardly realise what it is to live under a system wherein revolution plays a biennial part * and where the security of life and property depends more often on the oversight of those who break the laws than on the vigilance of those who execute them.

The next day we got up at five and galloped about the town and its suburbs behind two splendid horses. All the horses in Montevideo seemed good, with more substance and blood than the Chilian horse, good as he is. The Argentine horse is not to be mentioned in the same breath with either of the others; he is an obstinate, ugly, vicious, goose-rumped, intractable beast.

Houses in the Spanish American States are all arranged on the same plan. There is but one story and the rooms, as well as the front door, all open upon a central *patio* or courtyard, which is usually filled with flowers and shrubs, with sometimes a fountain in the middle. Mosquitoes are a great nuisance in most parts of the country in summer time, and a fish-filled fountain helps to decimate them. The insects come to the water and lay their eggs there, and the fat carp devour both parents and progeny. Although many of the residential houses are exceedingly well built of solid stone, and from good architectural designs, their owners seem to care nothing at all about their situation. I have seen a gentleman's dwelling stuck between two squalid tenements of the lowest class, from whose doors poultry, pigs and children issued indifferently to their playground in the street. On the other

* Since writing the above news has arrived of a fresh revolution in Uruguay. The retiring President (cf. *infra*) must be glad he escaped when he did.

hand, there is one street in Montevideo which seems to have been consecrated by some convention to the erection of beautiful *quintas* (villas) in beautiful gardens. Every conceivable style of architecture suitable to the climate is represented there, and gems of Moorish, Saracenic and Hindu art glitter in settings of oleanders and palms. Outside the city are several well-laid-out parks, shady with eucalyptus and pines; we were told that these were all private property, whose owners put them at the disposal of the public. No doubt the cost of keeping them up is to a large extent defrayed by the profits of the beer kiosk, which in all is to be found shyly awaiting customers in the depths of some wooded glade.

But our time in pretty, clean, well-built Montevideo, soon—too soon—came to an end; we plunged again over the waves of the horse-shoe bay and found nearly all the ships in the harbour gaily dressed with bunting. "What's it all about?" we asked. "The retiring President is going to Paris," we were told, "with five million dollars in his pocket." He had certainly lost no time about it. His successor was elected yesterday, and to-day he is aboard the *Atlantique* en route for Paris. *Aut Caesar aut nullus*—if he cannot be President of Uruguay he will not live there at all! Hardly. Yet no doubt South American rulers have a fine sense of the dramatic proprieties. In Chile, Balmaceda waited till the last hour of his term of office, and when the clock struck he blew out his brains; here is another gentleman who, having bled the country mercilessly for five years, dashes off to Europe with the proceeds. Balmaceda took away his life himself because he was well aware that if he did not somebody else would; the Uruguayan ex-President takes away his millions for the same reason. One is the unsuccessful type, the other the successful; the aim of both is to make money out of their tenure of power and to go away to spend it. Both obtain the wealth they covet, but the unsuccessful man

is driven by the force of circumstances to betake himself to a country where human drafts are not honoured. Such are South American politics, and when we thought of the five millions we were not surprised that all Montevideo had donned holiday attire at the prospect of seeing the last of another President.

On and on we dashed over the muddy waters of the mouth of the River Plate, here a hundred and thirty miles wide, and tried in vain to realise that this enormous stream, the product of the confluence of the Paranà and the Paraguay, carries annually down to the sea as much water as all the European rivers put together.

It is generally supposed in England that the bad government of the Argentine constitutes the chief objection to investing money in that country. The case of Mr. Barnett, for whose murder the British Government has certainly obtained a most inadequate compensation by the sentence of the murderer to eight years imprisonment, has recently lent colour to the belief that life and property are about as secure in that country as in the Congo Free State. But it will surprise many people to learn that there is at the present moment a large immigration of our own colonists from Australasia to the Argentine. Capitalists in Australia and New Zealand, by reason of the democratic tendency which is continually forcing more and more power into the hands of the working classes, are much in the position of householders whose butler—nay, whose oddman—dictates to them the routine of the household, the apportionment of wages and the rates of sale and purchase. In Australia, if some ill-conditioned roustabout at shearing-time makes a bother and is dismissed, the whole body of his comrades leave with him. Next year, more than likely, that very man is in the legislature, representing the constituency in which his late employer lived. What chance has a capitalist of existence, not as a successful legislator, but merely as

lord of his own domain and arbitrator of his own affairs under such conditions? The tendency of the Commonwealth since federation has been in one direction of ubiquitous interference in favour of the mob. The process of levelling down has been carried to such perfection that a poor law now provides work on demand to the unemployed at not less than seven shillings a day. The Australian protective policy, though rather combative than protective, is carried to such lengths that a ship touching at one and going on to another Australian port has all its provisions sealed at the first port, until such time as the ship shall finally leave Australian waters.

The Commonwealth's avowed object is to compel the ship to buy its provisions for its Australian cruise in Australia. Again, no person who has made a contract for any position in Australia is allowed to land in the country. Here the colonists secure themselves, as they hope, against foreign immigration. But naturally, such an absurd regulation is waste paper. Men land in the country, well knowing their destinations, but they sign their contracts afterwards.

Legislation of this type is driving men with money from Australia. Many of them have found a home in the Argentine, and the Government is precisely the factor wherein they hold themselves to be bettered by the change. An Argentine *peon*, a labourer, has a vote like an English rustic or an Australian roustabout. But he uses it as the Englishman usually does—to meet the wishes of his employer, and not to subvert them. The *estancieros* (landed proprietors) bring up a candidate, and the *peons* vote for him, in the conviction that their interests, generally speaking, are the interests of their master, and that they desire no political career for themselves.

Thus the Argentine Government—the government of a purely agricultural and pastoral country—is directed by men who recognise the importance of opening up and

stocking the vast idle districts of their country, and consequently their policy is to reduce land-taxation to a minimum and to foster the accumulation of capital essential to the exploitation of new territories. When one thinks of the immense quantity of British capital at present profitably sunk in the Argentine, and of the policy which is at present ruining our own colonies, one begins to wonder whether, after all, General Whitelock was not a blessing in disguise.

Buenos Aires has been so often described that everybody thinks he knows all about it. Paris in miniature it is; a beautifully neat, well-paved, well-built city, with an excellent system of electric cars, the scream of whose warning horns is in one's ears day and night.

Hurlingham, the Jockey Club and Recolecto Cemetery are the places that most impress the visitor. Hurlingham is a suburb where many of the business men of the city have their houses; but it is as the recreation ground of all the English in Buenos Aires that it is famous. It possesses the grounds and appliances for every outdoor game known to Britishers—polo, cricket, football, racquets, fives, lawn tennis, croquet, bowls, and golf. The Jockey Club, though its situation in a narrow cramped street rather mars its architectural impressiveness, is nevertheless one of the finest club houses in the world. Green and white marble is the predominating tone at the vast entrance hall; an exquisite female statue stands at the head of the great central flight of steps, and a sense of airy loftiness pervades the whole building. There are large rooms for every conceivable purpose, many of which are hung with tapestries to which age will bring a needed mellowing; but the distinctive feature of the Club is the *salle d'escrime*—a vast artistic chamber floored with dark wood and hung with a fine collection of shields and armour. Beyond this magnificent fencing school is a little room devoted to the disciples of Sandow, where

progress is difficult by reason of the multitude of gymnastic properties. One's only wonder is how people can be found energetic enough, in such a sweltering climate, to go in for such heavy indoor work as boxing and weight lifting.

The Cemetery of Recolecto is unlike anything else of its kind. There are fine mausoleums in many of the historic burial places of the world; but I know of none which contains, like Recolecto, nothing but beautiful mausoleums. It is a true city of the dead, for here the dead inhabit houses fit for the living—exquisite gems of marble crowned with angels, before whose wrought-iron doors strong figures bow their heads in eternal sorrow.

How different is this last long mortal home of the once beloved from the six feet of grass ridden earth headed by amorphous stones which in our own country mark the resting places of those who have fallen asleep!

A walk down the broad alleys that intersect this silent city brings to the mind none of the painful and disgusting thoughts associated with the decay of nature and the return of dust to dust. One feels that all that human love can do to perpetuate the memory and embellish the last home of the lost has here been done; and the contrast between the cheapness of our own fulsome epitaphs and the dearness of these flower-like palaces bears in upon the traveller's mind the conclusion that both in this pious matter of love for the dead and the æsthetic matter of the most appropriate and beautiful expression of that love we British might well take a lesson from the Argentines.

In some respects Buenos Aires strikes the visitor as one of the richest cities in the world. Palermo, the Hyde Park of the place, a large, well-laid-out pleasure garden planted with shady trees and dotted with artificial lakes, is crowded of an evening with as many smart carriages as ordinarily throng Hyde Park in the season.

There is nothing in the aspect of the bulk of the city

to convey the impression of a large population of very wealthy men. The residential streets, such as the Avenida General Alvear, contain magnificent villas set in gorgeous gardens; but there are comparatively few of them. After a time the visitor discovers that people who drive about in splendid carriages live in very dingy little houses, and presently it is borne in upon him that ostentation is the vice *par excellence* of South American Society, and that there are very few gems or roses either hereabouts whose seclusion would point a poet's moral. Palermo, on a carnival night, is a fine sight. Immense lines of carriages, two miles long and four ranks deep, march slowly on and on between the gloomy eucalyptus and the sparkling electric lights, to the accompaniment of music and the exchange of nosegays.

We got ourselves disliked about the nosegay throwing. My wife would persist in launching heavy bouquets at three pompous old men sitting like fossilized parrots in a landau—which we afterwards discovered was a most immodest thing for a lady to do. Nor could we all resist the temptation of using the buttonholes as missiles rather than love charms. The initiated gently flutter the flowers into the laps of the ladies of their choice; but we had no ladies to ingratiate ourselves with, and so we hurled the wire-bound nosegays with irresistible force at any offensive-looking men we saw, and were fully occupied. Sometimes, when a whole volley hit one about the back of the neck and ears, he would rise up in his carriage with a face distorted with rage; but fortunately we were moving in opposite directions, and as at least half an hour must elapse before we could encounter our quarry again, a dead set was made by us at a good-looking baron driving a team; we determined to carry away his white hat, and to that intent discharged about two guineas' worth of very cheap buttonholes in our ineffectual efforts. However, we compelled him to hold his hat on with his right

hand while he received our broadside—an effort which cocked the curve of his whip into the noses of the ladies behind him, and gave him altogether a very unknowing appearance.

So we were quite satisfied; for we were a long way below him and hardly expected to take home the white hat as a trophy. At last we were quite glad we had failed, for the Baron took the whole jest in such excellent part and smiled so cheerily directly he saw us, that we felt he was the best of good fellows and nearly gave him a cheer.

Very few people know where the Falkland Islands are. Fewer still care. They are within two days' steaming east of Sandy Point, the southernmost settlement of South America and of the globe in the Atlantic, and in almost the same latitude (50° S.) as Sandy Point. Our steamer put in at Port Stanley, the capital of the Islands, to take in passengers and sheepskins, and we had a few hours in which to explore the little town.

In many ways the Kelpers, as the indigenous people call themselves, owing to the amount of Kelp around their shores, are an interesting study. They number only two thousand, and there does not appear to be a death rate. When a man wants to die he goes away, like a Guanaco.

At all events, there is no hospital. But there certainly is a cemetery, very nearly as big as Stanley itself, and quite as deserted-looking. The Kelpers are governed by a Governor, a Bishop, and the Falkland Islands Company. The two former are liable to the human incidents of decay and removal, and consequently their influence is not so great as that of the Company, which is immortal. It deals in sheepskins, wool, tallow, and the interests of the Falkland Islanders. The latter consider themselves, with some show of reason, the most governed community on earth. The Governor lives in a wooden shanty which looks as though it had once been a seaside bungalow at

Birchington, but in reality it cost five thousand pounds on the spot.

The Cathedral is a brick structure whose towers are painfully lacking; already the bricks are badly weathered, and the cost of the incomplete structure so far is not less than ten thousand pounds. For wages are high here; a labouring man gets 6*s*. 4*d*. a day, with house, fuel, and mutton; a ship's carpenter working on weatherbound vessels can get anything he likes under a sovereign a day.

In past times the islands have been the dumping ground for Governors who had proved failures elsewhere. One genial gentleman was always in such a state of intoxication that when he went on an official inspection one man was always told off to hold him up in his boat or carriage, while it was another's duty to convey the Governor's hand to his cap in response to the salute. Finally, this worthy decided to take a long leave to Europe, whence his subjects devoutly prayed that he might never return. They crowded in boats round the vessel that was to carry him away, and as the great ship moved down the harbour all the bands of Stanley and the islands blazed out the Rogues March in unison.

Some clergymen have a cure of souls. The Bishop of the Falklands has a sinecure of souls. If he confined, or was expected to confine, his ministrations to the titular boundaries of his diocese, he would indeed be a fortunate individual. Of the two thousand souls in the Islands more than half are Dissenters, and chapels rear their finished heads in disconcerting proximity to the truncated bulk of the Cathedral. But Bishop Every, at any rate, is more than this: he is Bishop, *in partibus infidelium*, of all South America. He travels indefatigably round his vast spiritual possessions and inspires and controls the incumbents of the English churches at Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Rosario, Sandy Point and Valparaiso. No easy task has a colonial bishop. The pastors of the

various churches are paid by, and are liable to removal by, the body of the Protestants of each locality. Consequently, no clergyman goes out of his way to preach the terrors of hell to a community which perchance, as at Valparaiso, has come to regard Sunday horse-racing as a legitimate arrangement. John Knoxes do not fill these billets, and the task of a keen and capable man like Bishop Every is to stimulate both parsons and people to a higher standard of Christian endeavour and Christian practice.

The Falklands have passed through several periods. First there was the fox period, then the goose period, and now there is a sheep period. When the first settlers arrived, about 1840, the foxes and the *chimangoes*, a large hawk, together put an end to the few lambs on which the community was building its hopes of future wealth. This would never do; and so a crusade was preached and every ounce of ammunition was reserved for Brer Fox, who speedily became a thing of the past, like his friend the Mylodon across the water in South America.

The chimangoes helped to kill themselves. So tame were they that a man might easily throw a noose over their heads. Then they fastened their wings together behind them and waited. Presently whole flocks of cannibal chimangoes would come to make a meal off the captives. The latter would thereupon capture a friend in each claw and hold them tight till an islander came to convert them, in their turn, into traps, and so it went on to the end of the chimango chapter.

When the foxes and chimangoes had gone, and to a large extent also the wicked saddle-back gulls, who peck out the eyes and tongues of lost sheep, the geese advanced in myriads from Tierra del Fuego and took possession as lords paramount. But the patient islanders did not want goose—they wanted mutton. The geese ate up all the grass and the sheep withered away. So men were offered

fifteen shillings for a hundred goose rumps, and soon the sheep had enough and to spare. Both the sheep and the grass of the Falklands are anomalies. A shipwrecked sailor once lived for three months (a second Nebuchadnezzar) on the succulent root-stalks of the latter; but the sheep are individually so valueless that if they won't stand still to be shorn they shoot them and take the wool off at their leisure. Mutton there is called "seven hundred and thirty," because it is eaten twice a day all the year round. It is a drug, a thing of nought, as Bottom says of the paramour; it has not the value of the peat which no man may cut at will for fuel. It is not exported; the worthless old sheep is boiled down for tallow and his head and lean parts are thrown into the harbour. That is why, when the big steamers' screws begin to work in the mud, there is such a pestilential smell in Stanley.

The coast is fringed everywhere with sheeps' heads and trotters, and no decent man in Stanley ever thinks of offering his guests mutton. Each sheep is worth about 1*s.* 6*d.* per annum, and about twelve per cent. of the total die annually in the winter storms. For the climate is fearful, and the whole aspect of the land confirms Darwin's estimate of its wild barrenness. Not a single tree or shrub of any kind is native there; the hawthorn will not bloom under that chilly sun, a kind of cranberry, called the diddledee, is the only plant, with a few bog-myrtles, which will grow upon the waterlogged and wind-swept moors.

Yet hosts of English flowers can be grown successfully in the open; honeysuckle covers the prettiest house in Stanley; and we managed to secure a great bunch of ox-eyed daisies, cornflowers, quaker-grass, pinks and sweet william out of the Governor's garden. The sloping yellow moors, stoney and inhospitable, rise into sharp-pointed hills on the horizon; Stanley, a disconnected cluster of white and pink and grey wooden houses, lying

close to the green waters of the land-locked bay, looks exactly like a fishing village on the west coast of Scotland. The angry temper of the surrounding seas is vouched for by the prodigious number of dismantled vessels that lie dotted about the long reaches of the inland bays. Terrific gales sweep over this distant corner of the earth in the long winter months; only last year the barquentine *Thetis* went down with all hands.

Close to Stanley, now used as a store for sheepskins, lies the old *Great Britain*, the first iron ship that ever left British shores. It is said that when she was first launched crowds thronged the banks of the Clyde in the confident expectation of seeing her go to the bottom. For many years she was in the Australian trade, and now she does light work for the Falkland Islands Company, brightened every now and then by a sight of her great grandchildren —the armoured cruisers of the British Navy. A perusal of one of the annual reports of the Falklands gives a clue to the ubiquitous success of our colonial system. Its guiding principle may be said to be the preservation of the British status. Englishmen are to remain Englishmen wherever they may be, even on a group of tiny islands ten thousand miles from the places of their birth, with all the institutions, obligations, and privileges incidental to their former life in the Mother Country. Thus the emigrant, however far from home, is not allowed to forget the sense of governmental responsibility which is the foundation of order, and in the course of time custom and self-respect prevent his adopting the lax habits of administration which his neighbours so temptingly exhibit.

This is the great argument in favour of the Crown Colony Government even where, as in the Falklands, these small communities are disposed to resent the imputation of incapacity to govern themselves. They are the tiny toddling children of the Motherland, and would

easily assimilate foreign, contiguous ideas of misgovernment if a governor, taxes, police, education and a cathedral were not forced upon them in their infancy. Soon the old institutions become a part of the new country; the Governor departs, the colony becomes autonomous; but the lessons of order, restraint and collective responsibility are never forgotten.

It matters little or nothing that in the course of years allegiance to the empire, as in the case of the United States, is broken off. The object of our colonial system is not to make obedient slaves, but men. We have learned, in the long course of centuries, the lesson taught to our colonists in a lifetime, and we reach it in the strong conviction that it produces the stablest and justest types of government as well as the best types of humanity.

Looking east and west and north and south, we may well cry with the prophet: "Wisdom is justified of her children." The income of the Falklands is not so large as that of a wealthy squire; it is little more than £15,000 a year. But the main thing is that it is spent in the English and orthodox manner. What do the islanders want with a cathedral or a bishop? But it is good that they should have them; and it is better still that they should pay for them. The item "ecclesiastical" is something over four hundred and fifty a year; "education" is only six hundred and thirty; some years the police cost two hundred and fifty, perhaps less than the sum spent on their whistles in England; occasionally they run into three hundred. Doctors about six hundred, though the names of the patients are not given, and as there is no hospital it is difficult to understand their precise standing; the Governor is responsible for £1500, and his secretary for seven hundred. Imports amount to £74,000, and exports to £110,000, and there is £50,000 in the Savings Bank. Twenty-five pounds per head of the population in the Savings Bank is a record no other

community in the world can show. Under the heading "Naval and Military" we read that in 1902 the volunteer rifle corps numbered three officers and ninety-seven non-commissioned officers and men.

Not only is there no hospital, but there is no infectious or contagious disease in the islands. But there is something almost worse; there is a paper. Clergymen appear to be a tribe unable to support life without "organs" of various kinds. Naturally this paper, called *The Falkland Islands Magazine*, which appears monthly, has a picture of Christchurch Cathedral (Stanley) on its cover, wherein that edifice is glorious without, decorated with a grand tower which in reality does not exist. The front page also proclaims to an awed world the names of the Very Rev. Mr. Dean, his coadjutor, the Editor of the magazine, and the "Select Vestry," which includes such portentous personages as the organist, one sidesman, and the sexton.

Of the contents the less said the better. Any English parish magazine chronicles the like small beer, and the more imaginative portion consists principally of ill-spelt letters from Kelpers with literary ambitions.

But it is time to leave the Falklands and their microscopic institutions. Two days' steaming brings our ship within sight of the burnt and blackened pine forest that stretches away far inland from the outskirts of the prosperous Chilian Settlement of Sandy Point, or Punta Arenas.

Beyond that pine forest lie the breezy uplands of Patagonia.

"What ho! steward! Bring up my luggage; I am for the shore."

A NIGHT IN THE OPEN AT TWENTY-TWO THOUSAND FEET

BEING AN ACCOUNT OF AN ASCENT OF ACONCAGUA

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BEING AN ACCOUNT OF AN ASCENT OF ACONCAGUA

N Argentine gentleman, a member of the Jockey Club in Buenos Aires, sunk in an easy chair in that most gorgeous establishment, asked an acquaintance of mine if I were not mad. My friend replied that he believed I was sane enough. "No," said the luxurious Argentine gentleman, sipping his whisky-and-soda; "anyone who is such a fool as to climb Aconcagua must be off his head!"

Having thus disposed of the matter entirely to his own satisfaction, the luxurious Argentine gentleman lit a fresh cigar, rang for another whisky-and-soda, and put his feet on a neighbouring table.

At first blush there seems a good deal in the argument. Why should any reasonable human being commit himself to any enterprise involving certain suffering and hardship, but bringing neither renown to himself nor advantage to the rest of the world?

When I was struggling, panting and weary, up the steep flank of the mountain, or lying awake at night, with a palpitating headache, in a frowsy tent, I felt convinced that the luxurious Argentine gentleman was entirely correct in his verdict, and that I was in good sooth one of the most suicidal maniacs that ever escaped Hanwell. But now that I am sitting in the comfortable saloon of the Pacific S.N. Co.'s s.s. *California*, I see things in a different

light. Even the dumpy white bandages that serve to remind me of ten missing toes cannot persuade me that I had better have left Aconcagua alone. The changes and chances of this mortal life are fairly portioned out: and when I come to balance my lost toes against the lost livers of the luxurious Argentine gentleman and the rest of his degenerate tribe, I begin to fancy that the advantage is not altogether theirs. I see you, my dear friend of the Jockey Club, a dozen years hence hobbling with gouty feet about the local spa, swilling præ-prandial cups of nauseous water and cursing the day you were born! Then will you look up at the white peaks of the Cordillera, gleaming in the distance, and wonder regretfully how it is that Brown, Jones, and Robinson, who have lost respectively a nose, an ear, and two fingers on the mountains, should yet be sounder men at sixty than you are at forty-five.

Men climb mountains for various reasons; I climbed Aconcagua on account of its geographical position. Having decided to visit Chile I discovered that the great mountain lay close to the high road between Southampton and Valparaiso; so close, indeed, that to pass it by unvisited would amount almost to an act of discourtesy. Subsequently, I am bound to admit, I was influenced by certain subsidiary considerations. Having procured and read Mr. E. A. Fitzgerald's massy volume on the subject of climbing in the Andes,* I felt that to draw back in the matter of the mountain would be to forfeit all my self-respect for ever. I dared not face the remainder of my existence harbouring within my bosom a still small voice for ever murmuring, "You funked Aconcagua. Now, you needn't deny it: you know it as well as I do." For Mr. Fitzgerald's book is very blood-curdling.

Yet I prefer to it the unvarnished narrative of Sir Martin Conway's ascent of the same mountain in 1898,†

* "The Highest Andes," by E. A. Fitzgerald.

† "Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego." Cassell & Co.

wherein that distinguished climber tells the story of his success. In five and a half days after leaving the hotel at Baños del Inca he was back there again, victorious, notwithstanding all the horrors of the Horcones torrent and precipices, the terrors of the glacier, and the savageries of the mountain itself.

When I had read Sir Martin Conway's book my spirits revived, for he says emphatically that the conquest of Aconcagua is nothing but a matter of stamina and endurance. I managed to get an introduction to the author, and Sir Martin most kindly received me in his beautiful house in Kensington. In reply to my question whether I, who had only climbed alone in the Himalayas and the Rocky Mountains, after snow-leopards, ibex, and bighorn sheep, and had never even seen a Swiss guide, could possibly hope to get, with a native, to the top of Aconcagua, Sir Martin said, "Yes; go straight at it, and you'll do it all right," meaning thereby that the longer the time spent in half-hearted attacks in that depressing rarefied air the less the chance of ultimate success. Showing me a photograph of the great mountain, Sir Martin said, "When you get half-way up, keep away to the left; I went too much to my right (*i.e.* west), and got on to the second peak by a very difficult *arête*. The highest point is the easternmost one." After much more valuable advice, Sir Martin most generously presented me with his Primus stove, reindeer sleeping-bag, Whymper tent, and wind-proof leather coat. "I have lent them to a chap who is exhibiting all my Spitzbergen things at the Crystal Palace," said he; "but here is a note to the authorities there, and you can take away whatever you like." Here was kindness indeed. I dashed down forthwith to the Crystal Palace, and after ascending the myriad steps and facing the myriad statues that make a visit to that emporium of pleasure such a very laborious proceeding, I explained my errand to one of the staff,

and was by him conducted into a pitch-dark room. My guide hailed some invisible personage, and presently a light was switched on, revealing an American gentleman, who had apparently been revelling in the darkness, seated in the midst of a miscellaneous collection of skis, sledges, tents, ice-axes, and sleeping-bags. When this gentleman became aware that I was empowered to deprive him of the bulk of his exhibits he became as arctic in manner as his trophies, and my selection of the things I wanted was punctuated by his derisive comments. "I reckon that old stove is out of-date by this time; besides, you could have bought a new one in London for less than half your fare down heah." "You'll observe that that sleeping-bag is entirely moth-eaten, and that all the hair's coming out: not a very pleasant place to spend the night in, I calkilate!" "The tent you have in your hand is full of holes, and all the guy-ropes are broken short off. The price of such a tent *new* (with fearful emphasis on the new) is 31*s.* 6*d.* cash."

However, I survived the sarcasms of the irate exhibitor of antiquities, and returned rejoicing to London with my booty. Next, following Sir Martin Conway's advice, I paid a visit to Dr. Jaeger's shop in Regent Street, where I bought a stock of his unrivalled woollen clothes; and to the warmth of those fabrics I undoubtedly owe my life.

From the Military Equipment Stores, Waterloo Place, I bought a Whymper tent, 7 feet long by 4 feet wide, and 3 ft. 6 in. high at the ridge, with canvas floor sewn to the sides to keep out the wind. Then, with my own old favourite 8 feet square Edgington tent, which has been my home in many a wild corner of the world, some chocolate, Brand's essence of beef, a few meat lozenges, an ice-axe, and a gloriously light wolfskin fur coat and cap from Messrs. Revillon, of Queen Victoria Street, E.C., my equipment was complete.

The voyage to Buenos Aires and the journey thence to

Mendoza and Puente del Inca are not part of my story. In Mr. Fitzgerald's day the little dexterous railroad that dives into the Cordillera at Mendoza reached only as far as Las Vacas; but now it has crept ten miles further on, to the famous Puente del Inca, where a natural bridge (*puente*) spans the river formed by the merging of the Cuevas and Horcones torrents with the hot sulphurous waters that have made the Baths of Inca famous throughout South America. To Dr. Cotton's enterprise is due the building of a wooden hotel not a hundred yards from the springs. The latter, as they gush out over the steep varicoloured banks of the river, painting the soil with red and green and ochre bands, are surrounded by quaint little bathing-sheds which cunningly contrived steps, bridges and ladders bring into intercommunication. Presently an attendant dashes out of an unsuspected cavern with a towel: he mulcts you in the sum of one dollar—about one-and-ninepence—and leaves you to your own devices. Now you are free to bathe in Champagne, or Venus, or Mercury, according to the virulence of your complaint and the strength of your constitution. He must be a strong man wrestling with a fell disease who tackles Champagne with profit—where the water bubbles up white and frothy, and carbonic-acid gas poisons the air. If you elect to sit in those warm delicious waters you must continually wave a towel to exorcise the atmosphere of those demoniac fumes. Hither come drunken *peons* (workmen) and go to sleep comfortably; and presently the attendant comes to turn them out, but cannot wake them; nor Dr. Cotton either, nor any other human agency whatsoever. Venus, as elsewhere, was the favourite; and I am bound to say that in my case she acted according to her wont, and rewarded my tribute with a confounded feeling of slackness.

Few Englishmen who have not travelled beyond Europe can realise the ghastly desolation of the high

valleys of the Andes. The ruddy, porphyry, snow-topped mountains rise unredeemed by one solitary bush or tree; for two months only in the year a few blades of grass, emerald near the little springs, and patches of bright flowers drape the lower flanks of the mountains and the boulder-strewn valleys. During the rest of the year snow is the only garment that covers the nakedness of those howling wastes.

At the head of one of these broad valleys, belittled by the frowning giants on either side, stands the Inca Hotel, close to the little cluster of shanties which house the workers on the railway. There, on arrival, I found that Dr. Cotton had most kindly made all necessary arrangements for my trip to the big mountain. The weather, as he had wired to me at Buenos Aires, was much the same as that experienced by Sir M. Conway in 1898; there was a lot of snow about for the time of year (December 7); but that might not prove a drawback. The mules and their *arriero* * were hired; the guide and porters were on the spot, and very nearly sober; and there was plenty of food to be bought at the store at the back of the hotel.

So my wife and I, or at any rate I—for my wife had a prophetic aversion to the whole idea of the Aconcagua expedition—went rejoicing on our way to dress for dinner, and discovered our quarters in a bare match-boarded room with a flapping canvas ceiling and a door with a couple of wooden latches so curiously contrived that, whereas you could not bolt the door from the inside, the person who left the room and shut the door invariably made you a prisoner. How often have we battered the walls and yelled from the window to be released when Luís or Stefan, the two bristle-headed male housemaids, have left us in durance! Luís was a queer fellow. One day, some time later, as I lay in bed groaning with pain, I was irritated by his stupidity, and I was not

* The driver, who is generally the owner.

so polite in my requests as he thought I ought to be. Outside the door I soon heard a terrific hubbub; Luís's voice, broken with rage and tears, was to be heard swearing that he would first have my blood and then escape to Chile; that he was not a dog, and a great deal more to the same effect. To Dr. Cotton's vigorous persuasion I owe my life.

It is as well that intending visitors should know that in South America everybody considers himself every bit as good as everybody else, if not better. You must ask a waiter for the potatoes with the same grave air of deference that you would petition your father for an increased allowance, or expect to have a knife between your ribs before the savoury.

Early next morning I inspected my men. There were four of them—Anacleto Olavarria, the guide; Ramón Leiva, the *arriero*; and José Villegas and Manuel Gutierrez, the porters. Anacleto went as a porter with Sir Martin Conway's expedition in 1898, and Sir Martin told me to be sure and secure him as a guide if he were alive; but he had heard he was dead. However, Anacleto was not dead, although Dr. Cotton admitted that since Sir Martin's visit Anacleto had consumed enough *aguardiente* to kill a weaker vessel. In Sir Martin Conway's book, *Aconcagua and Tierra del Fuego*, page 74, his guide, Maquignaz, reports to Sir Martin: "Anacleto went like a goat. He was the best of us all. . . . He seems to have had experience in carrying loads over the Cumbre in winter. Besides, he is keen to go up the mountain, and wants to do all he can to help us. If only he had brought warmer clothes with him we might have taken him to the top. There is nothing in the world he would like better."

Sir Martin continues: "A minute or two later Anacleto came up, his face radiant with satisfaction; I never saw a man more delighted to be upon mountains. From such human material an excellent guide could easily be made."

On page 82 Sir Martin, speaking of the ascent of the steep screes, writes: "Here, again, Anacleto suffered less than any of us, partly because of his splendidly hard condition and strength, partly through long practice in scrambling up slopes of débris. I noticed that, although heavily laden, he slipped back less than we did."

Of the final stages of his descent of Aconcagua, Sir Martin says (page 101): "Anacleto kept the roll of sleeping-bags, upon which he insisted that I should seat myself. He tied one end of his belt to its cord, held the other in his hand, and started running down the soft snow slope, dragging me behind him as on a sledge. The bundle frequently turned over on one side or another and pitched me off. Snow drifted in at my neck and up my sleeves, and every mishap that occurred was occasion to him of renewed delight. Never was man in more frolicsome humour. He laughed, shouted, and sang without cessation. 'I know the way up Aconcagua,' he said; 'I alone of all the people hereabouts; and now I will set up as a guide and take people to the top. I, Anacleto Olavarria, guide to Aconcagua!'"

Lastly, writing of his descent from Portillo to Juncal, on the western slopes of the Andes, Sir Martin says: "The descent occupied just thirty-five minutes, thanks to Anacleto's bold lead. Such riding down a steep hillside I had never seen. Where he went I was content to follow in blind reliance upon his knowledge of what mules could do. He rode perfectly straight down the steepest slopes, even of big débris, and that not at a slow walk or with any careful picking of the way, but at a pace that was a sort of tumbling trot. Twice our direct route was intersected by the zigzags at points where the road, being cut out of the hillside, was bordered by an almost vertical excavated wall, fifteen to twenty feet high. Here, at any rate, I looked to see Anacleto turn. But no such thing. He put his mule straight at the drop; and she, gathering

up her legs beneath her so that the four hoofs were bunched together, let herself go scraping down the wall till, arrived near the bottom, she gave a little kick and landed squarely in the road." On page 115 Sir Martin writes: "It only remained to take farewell of Anacleto, to whom I had become genuinely attached. He is one of the best assistants amongst the many good ones I have encountered in different parts of the world. I presented him with a tent, an ice-axe, rope, climbing-boots, and a few other small articles. He was proudly conscious of possessing a new dignity as guide to Aconcagua."

Such is an outline of the character, sketched by a good judge, of the Chileno whom two and a half dollars a day, with an extra fifty if he got me to the top of the mountain, enlisted in my service.

Anacleto is a short man, wiry, and inclined to be bandy-legged, with keen brown eyes, a brown beard, and small, neat features. Directly Dr. Cotton had engaged him for my trip he left his work on the railway and went on a drinking bout, which culminated in two days of speechless intoxication. When we arrived at Inca the *aguardiente* had gone out of him, but a certain bleariness about the eyes told its tale. But Anacleto is really no worse than his fellows. The Chilian national cult is drinking, which the authorities are making heroic but ineffectual efforts to repress by locking up anyone who is seen to stagger in his gait.

Ramón, the muleteer, is a stout, ruddy, prosperous-looking fellow; Manuel is a youth with a little moustache and imperial, and a fine taste in colour—a *poncho* * gaudily fringed with green and red dangling about him, a blue scarf round his neck, and a flower in his buttonhole.

José is the most blackguardly-looking individual it

* The national cloak and blanket with a hole in the middle, through which the head is passed.

has ever been my misfortune to meet. He, too, is short and very strongly built, with a scratchy beard stuck into the sun-blackened skin round his cruel, animal-like mouth. His eyes are bloodshot and foxy, and the whole aspect of the man suggests midnight deeds of blood. Misery does, indeed, acquaint us with strange bed-fellows; and only the paralysing cold of Aconcagua could have prevailed with me to lie, as I subsequently did, cheek by jowl with that hideous cut-throat.

On Tuesday, December 9, 1902, Ramón and Manuel started off with the baggage-mules for the base camp, which Dr. Cotton advised me to pitch at 16,000 feet, to which point animals can be got with a struggle. There were three mules to carry the tents, provisions, stove, oil, and sleeping-bags for Anacleto and myself. For the former I had purchased in Buenos Aires a capital bag of *guanaco* * skins. The men took a prodigious quantity of meat, bread, and *maté*; † I, knowing from Sir Martin Conway the difficulty of digesting heavy foods at high altitudes, took only some tins of Brand's essence of beef, chocolate, meat-lozenges, Van Houten's cocoa, and kola biscuits. The mules, blindfolded with *ponchos* during the operation of loading, were soon ready, and trotted off after their *madrina*,‡ down the accustomed path towards the natural bridge. Then Ramón and Manuel swung themselves into their saddles, clapped their enormous spurs to their horses, and galloped headlong into the distance.

Dr. Cotton and I spent the day in riding to the Penitentes, a mountain spired and buttressed like a cathedral, towards which a curving band of isolated rocks, emerging

* The *guanaco* is an animal allied to the llama (pronounced "yarma") and the vicuña. It has been described as having the head of a camel, the body of a sheep, the feet of a deer, the neigh of a horse, and the speed of the devil.

† The dried product of *yerba*, which is drunk with boiling water through a *bombilla*, or tube.

‡ "Godmother," a mare who leads the mules.

from a bare slope, gives the idea of a procession of cowled monks. After fording a very nasty-looking torrent, running in yeasty haste over huge boulders, and climbing a steep, powdery slope, we got a large view of the mountains towards the west, especially of the quaint *Bodega*,* a flat-topped mountain on whose broad back squats a ridiculous little square rock, just like a solitary hut dumped down on a stretching plain. But, alas! Aconcagua was shrouded in mists, and presently the storm swept fiercely down the valley in front of us, and lashed us for a few minutes with its snowy tail. One's first ride on a Chilian pony convinces one that no animal in the world is bolder, surer-footed, or handier. With my own seven-pound saddle on a corky little bay of about 13 hands 3 inches at the end of my first day's ride I felt prepared to follow even the reckless Anacleto himself.

Next morning, December 10, accompanied by Anacleto and José, I set out for Aconcagua. Early I began the lengthy task of dressing, and here I had best enumerate the hundred and one articles of my clothing. Even now I have an affectionate feeling for those amorphous bundles of fabricated wool. I have caught myself gazing sentimentally at my drawers, and I have dropped more than one tear over my waistcoat; when I get home I shall hang up my shirts alongside the ibex heads and the snow-leopard skin. Do I not owe to this devoted bodyguard a life almost miraculously preserved? Alas! that the generations of Transandine postmen—hardy traversers of the Cumbre—neither knew nor know the blessed name of Jaeger! Else were there not a tithe of the wooden crosses that to-day mark the spots, remote and solitary, where men foredone with cold lay down to sleep their last sleep. The philosophy of clothes takes on a new importance when the lack of it spells annihilation. I take the greatest possible pride in being the first to inform the

* *Bodega* is a store or shop.

world what it must wear in order to have the pleasure of going harmlessly to sleep for twelve hours * in the snow with the temperature ten degrees below zero.

First of all came a thin wool and silk vest to mitigate the tickling of Dr. Jaeger's brand-new pair of thickest "combinations," the comprehensive garment which followed next, enveloping all but head and feet. Then came two Jaeger shirts—one on top of t'other—beautiful, thick, sky-blue creatures; then a pair of very thick corduroy breeches, tactfully padded, with continuations down to the ankles; then a Jaeger sleeved waistcoat of pure wool; then a thick Jaeger coat, like a blanket, yellow and sheep-like; then the wind-proof leather jerkin given me by Sir Martin Conway, and a vicuña scarf round my neck to top up with. On my feet I first of all put an ordinary pair of merino socks; above them a pair of Shetland wool stockings; next a pair of what are called sleeping stockings, lamb's wool within and goat's hair without, about a quarter of an inch thick and hugely warm; then a still bigger pair of Shetland wool stockings; then a pair of enormous boots; and lastly a pair of putties, three yards long, wound round the elephantine bulk of my legs. On my head a wolfskin cap covered my ears and neck, and my hands were encased, first, in an ordinary pair of Jaeger woollen gloves, and secondly, in a large pair of gloves of the kind affected by babies, wherein the mobile thumb grins at the incarcerated fingers. In reserve I had my wolfskin coat, reaching to my knees, yet so light that it in no way interfered with my walking; and when all these things were donned my form assumed a burly bulkiness that would have rejoiced the heart of a sergeant-major. For the next six days I remained day and night in these garments, and touched neither soap nor water.

It was about nine when Anacleto, José, and I rode off,

* The writer slept from 4.30 p.m. to 4 a.m.

after having said good-bye to my wife and Dr. and Mrs. Cotton.

I did not like the parting with my wife, for with prophetic insight she had several times spoken despairingly of the Aconcagua trip, and how it would probably end in our having to abandon the chief object of our journey—a ride through Patagonia.

We turned our backs on the little group as we trotted down to the Inca bridge, but once over the stream our course lay westwards, and there in the distance still stood a little solitary figure waving a last farewell. The others had fled into the house for warmth; but there she still stood watching in the biting wind, till a dip in the valley hid us from her view. For two miles or more the track ran beside the newly completed railway line towards Cuevas, on which the engineers are still at work under my friend Mr. Sheridan. The sandy dunes over which we rode were patched with a light purple vetch, and a short rich grass, called *pastito*,* had draped the lowlands in their summer dress.

José had stopped for a moment at the railway men's store to buy a shovel, which he carried, much against his will, as tending to identify him as the Sancho Panza of the party, while Anacleto lit and smoked countless cigarettes of the most atrocious flavour.

About two and a half miles from Inca the Horcones valley diverges to the north from the great east and west valley of the Transandine route, and at its entrance nestles a little lake, well pictured in Mr. Fitzgerald's book, of which the photographs and Mr. Vines' narratives are the best parts. We had shot a duck or two on this lake a few days previously, and launched upon her waters a little collapsible boat—the first, said Dr. Cotton, that ever burst upon that silent sea. We rowed gaily about in her; but a too curious inspection of a large object at the

* Lit. "little pasture," the diminutive of *pasto*.

farther end of the lake, which proved to be inflated horse, nearly ended in asphyxia and shipwreck.

Hereabouts the carcasses of horses, animals that have succumbed to the strain of the journey from Argentine *estancias* * to Chilian *haciendas*,* are as numerous as the condors that swoop upwards as the traveller disturbs their meal. From this point Aconcagua, a towering precipice of snow, capped with twin peaks, is magnificently seen, and I carry away from the Andes no mental picture more beautiful than that first sight of the giant, where the condors' great black wings smote against the sunlit snows of the mountain far away and flashed again from the waters at our feet.

The path which we now took up the Horcones Valley, almost due north, has been fully described by both Sir Martin Conway and Mr. Fitzgerald; and by the latter in such a way as to convey the impression that it is particularly dangerous.

Mr. Fitzgerald boggles at the torrent and is amazed at the precipices. But the pleasing fact remains that he was not drowned—nay, more, he did not even get a ducking; not only did he not break his neck, but he never even fell down, for there is no mention of such a calamity in his book.

Of course we are told that the Swiss guides of both parties got into cold water; one would have expected nothing else. A Swiss guide on a horse is an anomaly resented even by inanimate nature. The fact is that if an unskilful rider, crossing a deep strongly running stream, pulls his horse's mouth about, turns his horse's head down stream, and shifts his weight from side to side in the extremity of his terror, there is no horse foaled that can get across safely. Thus poor Zurbriggen nearly met his fate; but I dare say that he had never thrown his leg

* The names by which farms are designated in Argentina and Chile respectively.

across a horse till he got to the Andes. For my own part I forded the same river that Sir Martin and Mr. Fitzgerald and their parties forded, and also another on the way to Penitentes, and yet I hardly got my legs splashed; and the same holds good of my guides on those six several occasions. As regards the track, I have seen many worse constantly traversed by pack-cayuses* in the Rocky Mountains and the Selkirks; I passed in blissful ignorance over Mr. Fitzgerald's godchild the Paso Malo and knew not my danger. Subsequently I had to walk over it with frostbitten feet, and if it had been as dangerous as he makes out I think I must have made an end on't there and then; for I was suffering tortures of pain, my nerves were gone, and my feet felt as though they belonged to somebody else.

If a man cannot walk along a good sound six-inch path in the mountains without making 'miration over it, as Brer Rabbit would say, when he gets home, well, then he had far better confine his excursions to the pavements of Ludgate Hill. It is wrong needlessly to discourage intending climbers, and here it may be said, once and for all, that there is nothing either in the approaches to or the ascent of Aconcagua that a strong pedestrian in good training cannot tackle successfully, provided always that he have the wit to keep himself warm.

It was a glorious day, bright and clear beyond European conception; and those delightful Chilian ponies personally conduct you so cleverly that you can drop the reins and star-gaze and ruminate without a qualm. On and on we went up the narrowing valley, looking down upon the roaring flood, with the great horizontally striped bulk of Almacenes† on our right and the Torlosa range over us on our left. Presently we emerged into the broad flat valley that runs up to the snout of the western Aconcagua

* Canadian name for ponies.

† Almacenes means a shop. The horizontal strata resemble coloured ponchos folded one above another.

glacier. Here the ground was sparsely strewn with twisted time-worn vegetable fibres—whether the roots or the branches of long since dead bushes I could not determine. Neither bush nor tree grew within fifty miles of this Inferno, and yet here were the bleached bones of what had once been green living things cast up like the battered flotsam of the sea on a desert shore.

Here it was that Anacleto came to the conclusion that it was time to lunch; so the horses were offsaddled and turned out to graze—a somewhat empty privilege—and José miraculously produced from somewhere several three-foot-long ribs of raw flesh, which might have been surreptitiously taken off my pony during the process of offsaddling for anything that I knew to the contrary. So we sat down by a little rill of water, and the men lit a fire with snags and proceeded to make an *asado* * by frizzling the ribs as they leaned near the blaze on bits of stick. Anacleto soon attacked his rib in the approved style: seizing it at one end with his left hand he cut down a strip of meat with his right, then he caught hold of the greasy flap with his teeth, and tugged and slit until the bone was bare. It was the behaviour of a dog who had been recently instructed in the use of a knife. Here a little pileated song-sparrow fluttered near us, and a couple of birds uncommonly like jack-snipe flew off a patch of bog hard by.

We had not gone very far after lunch before Anacleto pointed out to me the mules grazing on what seemed to be a naked hillside. Presently Ramón galloped up and explained to Anacleto (for he had small respect for my Spanish) that as they had been caught in the storm of the previous day they had remained where they were at the spot known to Fitzgerald and Conway as the 14,000-foot camp. This seemed an excellent reason for not going on during the storm; but it failed to explain why they had

* *I.e.* roast.

not made up for lost time on the day of our arrival. Soon we came on José and Manuel, lounging under a big rock, with the baggage and tents littered round them: they had had twenty-four hours in which to pitch the tents, and yet they had done nothing. This is the correct South American attitude, where the word on every lip is "*Mañana*."* "To-morrow! to-morrow! or if not to-morrow within a month at the outside" is a fair translation of that odious word. Naturally they had their excuse handy. They were waiting to know whether the *patron* † would camp there or go on further, knowing full well that, the mules having been turned out two miles away, the lateness of the hour made it impossible for us to go any further that night.

We pitched the Edgington and one of the Whympers, unpacked the bedding, and then set about supper. While it was cooking I made an experimental ascent of a very steep débris slope close to camp, and found it desperately hard work. Soon the wind began to blow with icy coldness, and we were all glad to huddle round a fire whereon a *cazuela* ‡ of beef, onions, and potatoes was hissing. I consumed a horrible meal; the onions were hard, the gobbets of meat were tough, and it was very unpleasant having to drink cocoa out of the same cup as José. But at 14,000 feet one is inclined to take things as they come. I soon left the fire for the tent, and went into my bag at six o'clock. I spent a miserable night—racked by terrific pains in my head, and weighed down by that awful feeling of depression which seems to afflict everybody, especially at night, at high altitudes. But next morning I found that the pains in my head vanished with the darkness; I seemed unaffected by the loss of sleep, and I tackled my breakfast with wondrous success. This day (December 11) we marched from the 14,000-foot camp to the 16,000-

* To-morrow. † Master.

‡ A kind of hot-pot, very popular in South America.

foot camp—about four miles over the glacier of Aconcagua on the Horcones side. The whole journey was an object-lesson in the power of horses to negotiate apparently impossible obstacles. The great bent cone of the Cuerno, a mountain very much resembling the Matterhorn, rose in front of us out of a dazzling realm of ice and snow. We had left the warm-coloured rocks behind us and got into an arctic world. Up and down, up and down our horses went, picking their way carefully between the tall, thickly studded cones of snow, called *nieves penitentes* * for the same reason that the mountain is called Penitentes—huge pointed lumps, over four feet high, standing in battle array, some bearing transversely on their tops large blocks like the dolmens of Stonehenge.

Sometimes we were ascending hard snow-slopes, so steep that it seemed impossible for a horse to climb them; sometimes rounding a curve into which the horses stuck their hoofs sideways to avoid slipping down into the abyss; sometimes the thin ice on the surface of a hidden stream crackled round their fetlocks; sometimes the clever little beasts bunched their legs together and slithered down an ice-bound bank in almost human fashion.

The wind blew with enormous force, whirling the powdery snow in wisps about the mountain-tops, and Anacleto, questioned about the weather, shook his head dubiously. About 3 P.M. we got to the 16,000-foot camp, after a final struggle up a terrific gradient, which proved too much for one of the mules.

Here levelled tent-sites and empty tins recalled to Anacleto his experiences of the past at the same spot; and he told me that, whereas Sir Martin Conway had had perfect weather at this point, I had come in for a gale. The wind was indeed fearful. We managed with the greatest difficulty to pitch two tents, but every gust seemed certain to carry them away.

* "Penitents of snow."

That afternoon I had no inclination to remain out of doors and admire that amphitheatre of chaotic snow-pilings soaring up into the dazzling sky. High up on the flank of the Cuerno a stupendous curved wave of snow was frozen as it broke—a rounded marble breaker three hundred yards across, with jagged fringe curling over the sheer immensities of its depth.

Nothing but the foot of Aconcagua was to be seen—we were too near the giant to see his head—but a long, dreary snow-slope up to some pointed rocks, round which the driven snow was whirling, shows us the morrow's march. I crawled into the sleeping-bag with the Primus stove near me, miserably anticipating the horrors of the night, and made some cocoa; but the wind continually blew out the methylated spirit flame which begins, and the petroleum flame which completes, the action of these lamps, so that the cooking operations were not soon over. Ough! the sickening smell of kerosene for ever present in one's nose! All the time I was on the Aconcagua journey, and for a week afterwards, I could taste nothing and smell nothing but that horrible oil. Then the reindeer bag was an excellent thing, and kept me splendidly warm; but the Crystal Palace gentleman was quite right when he said that for his part he would prefer one that had more recently parted company with a reindeer. The long stiff bristles came out in handfuls, getting into the food as one cooked, and into one's mouth as one slept. And Anacleto was not an ideal bedfellow either.

He smoked the vilest tobacco made on earth, and not unnaturally wanted frequently to expectorate during the process, which he did with great impartiality over my various belongings. If I had called him a filthy brute, even in the best Spanish equivalents, he would not have understood me, for spitting is a most gentlemanly sport in South America. Besides, I wanted to maintain the most cordial relations with the man on

whom, I believed, the success or failure of the expedition depended.

Sleep was almost an impossibility that night, so boisterous was the howling of the gale and so continual the banging of the tent canvas. At 1, 3, and 5 A.M. we had all to run out to make good damage done to the guy-ropes; and at last the expected happened, and the ridge-pole of my tent broke with a loud crack.

I did not care; I almost hoped that the wind would blow me back to Inca; for my head felt as though iron bands were shrunken on it without, and as though within a thousand imps of hell were driving sharp knives through and through my brain. I cannot hope to explain the feeling of utter despondency which pervades one during the hours of darkness at these high levels.

Anacleto was not long in deciding that it would be impossible to start that morning (December 12) for the 19,000-foot camp; we could not have kept our feet on the steeper slopes of the mountain. As we watched the powdery clouds driving away towards the west, a gust more terrific than the rest blew over one of the mule-trunks, which opened in its fall and let loose a green gauze veil which my dear wife had most thoughtfully provided for the better safeguarding of my complexion. I do not exaggerate when I say that in one second that veil was carried a quarter of a mile, and vanished for ever from our ken behind the nearest heights. So, to my bitter disappointment, the day had to be passed in doing nothing. After an early cup of cocoa I managed to sleep till ten, and after a scanty breakfast on Brand's essense of beef and chocolate, Anacleto took me for a little preliminary canter over the base of the Torlosa range. The further I went the better I felt; exercise chased away the ghastly humours of the night, and I found that I could walk without breathing harder than Anacleto, who was quite as grampus-like over stiff gradients as I was.

Eternal silence, killing cold, blinding glare! You are the trinity who rule these remote high hostile corners of the world; and every footprint on these snows looks like a violation, and every spoken word in this silence sounds like a challenge.

I felt, as perhaps many another has felt, a secret joy at finding myself for once at war with Nature. He who has loved her elsewhere, amid the flowers of his garden and under the stars of the summer nights; who has felt something akin to contempt for her on the long smug plains by the rivers; here must exult, as her icy sword strives to stop his heart, in the delight of battling with the ficklest creature of the universe. There was only one thing in that terrible valley, animal or vegetable, which still eluded death. On the small dusty patch on which our camp was pitched a few lone discs of stonecrop were starving. When I see you again, my little friends, clinging happily to the roof of an English cottage, I shall take off my hat to you, for now I know that you are the bravest arctic explorers in the whole brave kingdom of the plants.

That night was like the last, and like the one to come—agonising, filthy, and miserable beyond expression. At a very early hour on December 13 Anacleto decided that the wind had dropped sufficiently to allow us to march to the 19,000-foot camp, and about six o'clock we started—myself, Anacleto, Manuel, and José. The last three each carried a load, and I fancied at the time that Manuel, being the youngest of the party, had been given the lion's share of the baggage.

We took only the two small Whymper tents, sleeping-bags, blankets, Primus stove, and a little food. Snow was to supply us with water. Anacleto was now attired in a duplicate set of my clothes—Jaeger combinations about two feet too long for him, two azure shirts, three pairs of Shetland stockings, and Zurbriggen's boots, which that

famous man had presented to Dr. Cotton on his return from the first conquest of Aconcagua.

Our way led at first over slushy snow, between the serried *nieves penitentes*, almost due north; and then we turned up the great slope in a south-easterly direction. As far as eye could reach stretched a steep face of snow, and I saw that our ascent would be made under conditions very different from those prevailing at the dates of the Zurbriggen, Vines, and Conway ascents. Zurbriggen went to the top without putting his feet on snow, and Vines and Conway encountered far less snow than screes. As it turned out I trod on hardly anything but snow, both soft and hard, until I reached the rocky gully on the summit-ridge, and thus escaped almost entirely the continual backsliding on volcanic débris which so tired and retarded the previous expeditions.

It was about six when we started, and for hour after hour we went plodding on over the interminable white waste. Sometimes we came to places where steps had to be cut, and here Anacleto took the lead and hewed away with his ice-axe. Sir Martin Conway says in his book (p. 93) that there is no step on the whole mountain which a child could not take. I beg leave to doubt whether the child in the street would (and "could" in these cases hangs upon "would") climb step by step as the leader halts to hack out a fresh foothold up a snow face on which a fall would obviously mean extinction. The President of the Alpine Club must not found generalisations on the abnormal capacity of his own offspring to walk unaided on the spikes of the area railings and chase the cat over the window-cornices of the fifth storey.

The jagged rocks of our encampment by this time stood out well in view, and as the day wore on the weight of their burdens told on the men, and I managed to get a good lead, and sat down at last to rest on some boulders. Manuel and José were now far behind Anacleto; and

presently I heard a shout and then saw Anacleto put down his load and go down the mountain to his comrades. Manuel the dandy, Manuel the delight of the damsels of Inca, had given out, and lay panting in the snow. So Anacleto shoulders his load in his stead—which he evidently found a good deal heavier than his own—and he and José struggled up to where I sat, and began a long division and readjustment of the three loads, while Manuel got up and slunk down to illimitable beef and sleep.

There was nothing really the matter with him. No doubt he felt somewhat *puna*fied ; and perhaps the thought of all that beef wasting below turned the scale. He was not of heroic build, wasn't Manuel. We others toiled on, having to stop and lean like logs on our ice-axes, until at last, about four o'clock, we got to the bare flattish patch behind the jagged rocks whence Anacleto said Sir Martin Conway had made his way to the summit.

High above us, yet not seeming to be very far away, stood out the red palisades of rock that appeared to be the summit of Aconcagua ; behind us, to the west, we looked over Torlosa to the Pacific. I might have stayed out and watched what may have been, for aught I know, the most splendid sunset ever seen, but I didn't. Directly a tent was pitched I crawled into it, and then into my bag ; and the two men left the other tent unpitched and crawled in after me, remarking that now Manuel was gone there was plenty of room for everybody in one. We were all tired and cold and speechlessly miserable, and we were very crowded. As usual, the wind blew out the flame of the lamp time after time, and filled our noses and mouths with the oily stench ; but we got some hot cocoa at last. Soon it dawned on my dulled brain that there was something seriously amiss with Anacleto ; his eyes were bloodshot and watery, and he groaned incessantly. Although he had worn his goggles all day, he was evidently snow-blind : he seized my hand and thrust it

into his streaming eyes, crying out like a child that he was done for, and could go no farther.

"My eyes! Oh, my eyes!" he kept muttering, and then he would groan heart-rendingly. I felt so acutely wretched that this misfortune hardly affected me. At 19,000 feet existence itself seems the utmost limit of human endurance, and regrets and hopes cower as at the near approach of death. José was the only one of the three who slept much that night; Anacleto and I punctuated the long minutes with groans. The old pains in the head were torturing me; my limbs were sound and well, and I had no symptoms of the indigestion and nausea which had broken down several members of the previous expeditions. At one in the morning I gave up the farce of trying to sleep, and set about making more cocoa, which Anacleto and I drank to the music of José's snores. I also ate half-a-dozen tiny slabs of chocolate, as provided by the Army and Navy Stores, and when I had finished I felt as though I should not want any more food for a fortnight. As it happened, that cocoa and chocolate, with six meat lozenges, was the only food I ate for the next forty hours. Next I woke up José and asked him, in my two words of Spanish, if he would go with me to *el pico* * and earn an extra fifty dollars. He growled out "*Si*" † and went fast asleep again. At half-past three I, with great difficulty, roused him again, and got him, not without grumbling, to put on the layer upon layer of horsehide which served him as boots. While he was dressing I went outside and had a look at the weather. It was a grand morning, clear and cloudless, and the sun was already rosy on the windless peaks. I packed a rucksack with plenty of food for both of us, including a bottle of port and egg-flip specially reserved for the return journey; for though alcohol is a bad thing to climb on, it is an excellent thing to toboggan down on

* "The peak." † "Yes."

when you have reached the summit of your ambition and never want to see it again.

It was a little after four in the morning of December 14 when we set out; and I felt a little compunction in leaving poor Anacleto alone for twelve or fourteen hours, but what else could I do? To wait at 19,000 feet for a better opportunity is a physical impossibility; inaction at those heights is a creeping death. Directly we had emerged from the tent José asked me pointedly if I had got *el vino*,* and felt in the rucksack for the bottle to make certain. This was a bad sign; but I was carrying my large water-bottle myself, and I didn't care very much who got to the bottom of the port so long as I got to the top of the mountain. To our right loomed the steep red western face of Aconcagua; in front of us an enormous snow slope led up to some rocky peaks which appeared to be the summit, but which really were the flanks of the gullies leading to the top; towards the north (our left), high up on the slope, a line of serrated rocks led right up to what appeared to be the highest peaks. The shortest way to these peaks was, undoubtedly, straight up the great snow slope; but the gradient was very steep, and Sir Martin Conway had impressed on me the importance of keeping well to the north-east in order to strike the *couloir* leading to the actual summit of the mountain; whereas if you took the most obvious route you got into a gully leading to the westernmost and slightly lower of the two peaks, over a dangerous *arête* with a drop of two miles on one side of you and 300 feet on the other. Under normal conditions the great snow slope that confronted us was a mass of loose rolling stones, extremely difficult to climb; but now, owing to the extraordinary snowfall of the previous winter, it was almost entirely covered with a thick layer of snow, in some places soft on the surface, in others as hard as ice.

* "The wine."

Thus my task was an easier one than that of any of my predecessors. Where the snow was soft at the top the going could not have been better; there was just enough plasticity to prevent back-sliding without any of the labour of plodding through deep snow. Where the snow was hard it was another matter. The slope was in most places so steep that the nails in my boots were powerless to prevent slipping, and consequently I had to have recourse to the ice-axe and cut steps, which was a slower but, I think, a less laborious process than climbing the treacherous screes beneath. Mr. Vines, in his excellent account of his ascent,* laments the short-sighted advice of his guide, Nicola Lanti, who persuaded him to cross the steep face of the mountain, instead of making a détour to the north-east in order to take advantage of the solid rocks which there fringe the slope.

Notwithstanding the marked difference between the snow conditions under which Mr. Vines made his ascent and those confronting me, I decided to do what Mr. Vines regretted not having done, and I set my face towards the long rib of solid foothold, prolonging the route in order to get a better one. About an hour after the start, as I was trudging mechanically on and hugging myself in my fur coat, I heard a shout behind me, and looking round I saw José, about three hundred yards below standing in a woe-begone attitude.

Up through the still air came the words, "Yo no soy vaqueano para Aconcagua," † and then, to my speechless disgust, this villain of a fellow, rucksack and all, went off calmly down the snow towards the little green tent.

Fury possessed me as I thought of my lost lunch; I felt perfectly convinced at the time that José was leaving me purely and simply in order to change the position of the *vino* in which he felt such a fatherly interest. But from

* "The Highest Andes," p. 111.

† "I will not be a guide to Aconcagua."

what I subsequently gathered, I believe that José, drink-sodden roustabout as he was and is, was suffering from *puna*, produced or exaggerated by the intense cold, which the poor devil had not the same means of combating that I had. The short and the long of it was that he was not properly clad for the higher levels of Aconcagua; for on the previous day no one supposed that he would have to go beyond the 19,000-foot camp. Still, even now, when the loss of that lunch has ceased to annoy me, I think that he might have had the decency to bring it up to me before turning back. But such a course might have involved his losing the *vino*; and I suspect that this consideration decided Master José. Certain it is that when I returned to the little green tent nearly thirty hours later there were only dregs enough left in the bottle for the rascal to be able to swear, truthfully indeed, that there was "plenty for the *patron*."

For increasing one's bodily vigour there is nothing like losing one's temper; no tonic invented by the faculty can touch it. I well remember when a friend and I were wearily plodding, footsore, bedraggled, and almost fainting—through the western slums of London at eleven o'clock at night having, the evening before, in Balliol taken long odds to large amounts that we would not, or rather could not, walk the fifty-four miles between Oxford and London in eighteen hours—how three big policemen suddenly rushed out of a dark alley and made us prisoners, insisting that we were the burglars from the Uxbridge direction who had for so long been disturbing the peace of the metropolis.

We were within an ace of being locked up; that would mean the loss of our bets; the thought maddened us beyond words. Hubert, with his usual magnificent daring, was for knocking down all three policemen and escaping; but I pointed out to him in a whisper that we had both just sat down in the middle of the road from sheer

exhaustion, whereas the policemen were beefy fellows who had evidently supped. As a last resource I informed our captors that my friend's father was a member of the House of Lords and that my own father was a member of the House of Commons, and that if we were detained we would move heaven to procure their dismissal from the force for our false imprisonment. This argument fortunately prevailed, and we were released. But whereas before this episode we were almost unable to drag one leg after the other, thereafter we moved with the jauntiest of gaits, and won our bets, hands down, about one in the morning. In like manner my rage against José stimulated my nervous energy, and by nine o'clock I had got appreciably nearer the north-eastern rocks. The sun was now very powerful, and I felt very hot in my long fur-coat, so I called a halt and took off both my fur-coat and my outside pair of gloves and laid them on the snow in a position which I felt sure I should recognise on my way back. Man proposes. My beautiful eleven-guinea fur-coat and my lovely baby gloves lie there to this day; perhaps there they will lie to the end of the world. Here I took the water-bottle off my back and tried to have a drink; but the screw-stopper was frozen, and I could not undo it. Fortunately it was vulcanite, and a blow from my knife broke it off; and fortunately all the water inside was not frozen, though a good deal of it was. Here, too, I discovered, to my great delight, a tiny box of meat lozenges in the pocket of my leather jerkin; now I felt that if the worst came to the worst I should at any rate not starve for a day or two. Soon after this I passed the snowy region and got on to some hard rocks at the entrance of the *couloir*—a blessed relief after the wearisome step-cutting I had to resort to so often. Entering the gully I saw no more of the outside world; great red pinnacles towered on either side of the rocky road I had to climb. Here is was often necessary to use hands and

knees over the piled-up rocks. The work was very severe, and I had to stop and rest at no long intervals.

I counted the number of steps I could take without stopping to rest, and found the average about twenty. The worst moment of all was that immediately after stopping; the breath, now that the lungs were no longer violently expanded in the effort of walking, seemed to leave the body, and several deep gasps were necessary to procure relief. The top of the *couloir* cost me the greatest efforts I had to make. Here there was no snow, and the rocky floor gave place to powdered detritus which afforded no foothold whatever. Often I fell on my face, panting, and as often slipped backwards three or four feet. But at last I got free from the *couloir* and its débris floor, and stood on what had appeared to me from the 19,000-foot camp to be the summit of the mountain.

It was not the summit, however: away in front of me, to the southwards, perhaps a mile away, stood out the twin peaks I had to reach. They appeared very little higher than the ground I was on; but no doubt they were a thousand feet above me. To my amazement I saw the ground in front shelving downwards; a great depression, full of rocks and stones, and entirely free from snow, fell away from me, and then rose, forming a sort of natural amphitheatre towards the summits. But my attention was soon absorbed in contemplating the view which I had obtained for the first time at this point.

The east and the west and the north were now disclosed in all their immense grandeur. Tier upon tier of snowy peaks stretched away in all directions; beyond Torlosa on the west the Pacific, as on the previous evening, still lay dull and unresponsive to the sunshine; there was a break in the white legions towards the north-east through which a broad stretch of the Argentine pampas glistened; but elsewhere for hundreds of miles was nothing but ruddy spurs and marbled wastes and snowy pinnacles.

But I did not wait long under the perfect cone of porphyry that formed the end of the *couloir*. I hurried on with renewed confidence: the sight of that nearing summit was worth more than all the port José had appropriated. The going was now much easier than it had ever been; and in front the slope up to the final *arête* which runs in a huge arc along the southern face of Aconcagua, from the Horcones to the Vacas valleys, was less steep than the lower face of the mountain.

Up there in the open the air seemed more invigorating than in the narrow gully, and I should have been absolutely happy had not a tiny cloud warned me to make the most of my time. At last I reached the great *arête*, and looked over into that appalling 10,000-foot abyss. What a Tarpeian Rock from which to fall! Wouldn't there be a winged feeling of delight in the soul that sinks into oblivion from such a colossal height? But again something urged me onwards: this time it was not a prudential consideration; it was a snowflake. I had not far to go now, which was lucky. I struggled on at the top of my speed, which was in truth a very poor walk, and at last my hopes were crowned. A cliff in front shut out the view; I scrambled up it, and in front of me stood Zurbriggen's stoneman. I was on the top of Aconcagua, and the time was half-past one.

From various sources I have gathered that it is the correct thing to leave your card on the top of a mountain. I had not brought a card with me, because I started up with the conviction that I should find the top of Aconcagua at home; and when I find people at home I never leave my card on them. Of course, active volcanoes' tops are apt to be out when one calls; and I suppose that fact has, by false analogy, extended the etiquette to all summits. But at the time I was thinking less of perpetuating myself on the top than of prolonging my existence at the bottom of the mountain. The thought had

already occurred to me that the storm that was evidently brewing might last all day, perhaps even far into the night; if I stayed long where I was I should assuredly be killed. I remembered a passage in Sir Martin Conway's book (p. 103) in which he says that life would be impossible in a storm on the upper rocks of Aconcagua; and although my clothes and I were a little later the involuntary means of upsetting this theory, at this time I believed in it as gospel. So I left the inspection of Mr. Vines' thermometers to the next visitor; indeed my hands were now so cold that I doubt if I could have opened the cases. I pictured my poor wife sitting in that bare room at Inca alone, and Anacleto's tearful tale (I feel sure the poor fellow would have cried), and with one glance at the cairn I turned and hurried down the way I came. Half an hour later an enormous cloud rose off the Pacific, and in ten minutes the whole sky was darkened, and snow fell in deadly earnest. The rest is a confused mental tangle of intense cold, blinding snow, semi-darkness, crushing falls, despair, and the certainty of death. The further I went the worse grew the storm; soon I could only see a few feet in front of me. But I managed, as occasional rents in the pall of falling darkness helped me, to get upon the great northern snow slope, and blundered on, shouting in my agony for help—cries which the jeering rocks sent back to me unanswered. Twice on slippery hard snow I fell, and was at once whirled down the slope at a terrific pace. I clawed at the snow with my axe, but it would not grip on the hard surface, and I felt myself whirling onward at lightning speed to destruction. It was a most horrible sensation. But both times by some miracle I came to a patch of stones which stopped me. How far I rolled in this way I know not, but it must have been some hundreds of feet.

All this part of the journey is very hazy in my mind. I remember sitting down, paralysed with despair, with

fearful teeth-chatterings and shiverings shaking me; then I would call myself a coward and get up and go on for a few yards. But the deadly cold of that blizzard at 22,000 feet was fast overcoming me, and at last, as the storm still raged, I felt that I could go no further. I had wandered by this time on to a little promontory of rocks, which fell precipitously, as I found out next morning, to the slope 200 feet below. By the side of a big rock I saw a little scooped-out hollow in the snow: doubtless, thought I, this is my appointed grave. I sat down in it, quite glad to have ended the struggle, and looked at my watch. It was half-past four, and the snow was falling as thick as ever. Now I knew that I was done for. I took out my pocket-book and tried to trace a scrawl of farewell to my wife: it was unlikely that they would ever find my body, but still there was just a chance of it. That was the worst side of that last half-hour, as I fancied it, of my life. She had advised me strongly not to go; I had gone nevertheless; and now here was the end, and she would be alone.

Well, fortunately this sort of half-hour occurs very seldom; that one, I know, has brought me a fine crop of grey hairs. The teeth-chatterings and shiverings had gone now; a drowsy feeling came over me; I stretched myself on my back in my little grave, with my feet sticking over the precipice, and the divine Nature which comes to our rescue when our own thoughts would kill us carried me into the land of dreamless sleep.

When I awoke I thought I was dead. The crescent moon was riding through a sky of deepest metallic blue, against which the white peaks that on every side hedged in my view struck with an almost unearthly contrast. As I gradually comprehended the full glories of that magnificent scene exultation filled my soul. "The kings of the world," said I to myself, "are not half as well buried as I am. If only men knew that the spirit hovers near the

place where the body lies they would think less of the splendour of the mausoleum and more of its position. Shah Jehan built the Taj for Nur Mahal; he had much better have sent her to the Himalayas. I always thought Rhodes was a great man; now I think him greater than ever, for he must have known what happens after death. For he chose his sepulchre on the ridge of the Matoppos, and probably he is the only being outside China who has a decent post-mortem view. But here are you, a most insignificant fellow in life, turned into a kind of emperor of the dead, with a mausoleum higher and grander far than that of any human creature since the world began." Then I began to rack my brain for a reason for my posthumous honours and at length concluded, in the absence of more heroic virtues, that I must have been the only boy who never ill-treated a cat. There was a certain amount of cause, apart from the received tradition that people who go to sleep in snowstorms never wake up again, why I should believe in my bodily extinction. I was utterly without sensation of any kind in my limbs, and when I tried to move them they made no response.

The snow must have ceased soon after I lay down the previous evening, for I was only partly covered, and my feet stuck black out of the white mantle, with the toes turned inwards towards me in a horrible curl. The sight of those toes looking at me instead of at the sky made me feel rather squeamish, and, thought I to myself, if I can feel squeamish I can't be dead. So I began by trying to work my right arm, and after desperate efforts I broke it loose from the ice which had frozen it hard to the snow beneath. Examining my hand I found that the finger-tips of all the fingers were a mottled purple colour, and the nails of the second and third fingers were black. This frost-bite was due to the fact that in my efforts to clutch the snow in my two involuntary toboggans down the

mountain I had worn all the finger-tips off my gloves. Then I worked my left arm loose, the elbow in both arms being the chief point of attachment to the snow; even now the skin over my elbow joints is red and rough. Having freed my arms I broke my back free from the ice the heat of my body had generated, by pressure of my elbows, and sat up and tried to work my legs. Here I was less successful: my legs seemed paralysed; I could not move them at all. At this stage in the proceedings my delight in having the finest tomb on earth was sorely dashed. Here was I tied to the top of Aconcagua like a dog to his kennel. Every man must die once, but I strongly resented having to go through the process a second time. The imminent probability of this event, notwithstanding all my resentment, gave me a strength which I had otherwise lacked. After about half an hour's concentrated effort of will I succeeded in freeing my right leg, which appeared to be very nearly as useless free as it was tied, so numb and limp did it feel. With the left leg I had still more trouble. In trying to loosen it I must have wrenched the muscles in my groin, for they became exceedingly painful. At last I had both legs more or less at my command; but they obeyed orders very slowly and reluctantly, and the feet were both absolutely insubordinate.

All this time a wonderful sight was before me. The night gave way to the dawn; a faint twilight glimmered from behind the mighty bulk of Aconcagua and threw the giant's shadow far out into the distant sea; not a mere flat, intangible, two-dimensioned unreality like a common shadow, but a flesh-and-blood thing of length, breadth, and depth, lurid magenta-purple in colour, a gorgeous prism, stretching from the apex of the mountain in a straight line across his snow-clad satellites far into the Pacific. Higher and higher rose the sun; nearer and nearer, as though to greet him, came that royal purple-

clad shadow from across the sea: it climbed up the side of the mountain, kissed its creator, and died.

I had now, being a free man, to face the situation. It was about five o'clock of a fine and sunny morning, and I had to get down to my 19,000-foot camp if I could, or to Inca, twenty miles away or more, if I couldn't. To enable me to do this I had with me ten partly frozen fingers, two completely frozen feet and a small box of meat lozenges. I reckoned, knowing my stomach, which is a peculiar one, that the meat lozenges would keep me alive for three days. For at this time I had not the faintest hope of making either of my camps, having taken no bearings as I came up other than those afforded by the sun.

Aconcagua is such a huge mountain that one may be lost on it as easily as in the desert. As Mr. Fitzgerald says (p. 88), "the slopes of this mountain are so vast that it would be easy to get hopelessly lost on them." However, I had the sun to help me, as I knew that my course upwards from the 19,000-foot camp had been south with a touch of east in it. My difficulty was that I did not know how far or in what direction I had wandered during the snowstorm. I knew that the Horcones valley lay somewhere beneath me, as well as some very ugly precipices; if I could strike the valley I imagined I should get on somehow, even if I did not find the men and the mules. God only knows why I fancied I could have crossed the torrent alone; on my own legs I should assuredly have been drowned. Sometimes it is just as well to be oversanguine.

At five o'clock I got on my feet, having made a magnificent breakfast of six meat lozenges. My toes still looked up into my face imploringly, but I could do nothing for them; so I told them to lie down and behave themselves. I knew that five or six hours' rubbing might save them; but I also knew that a frostbitten man who has

been rubbed for five or six hours is in an acute state of agony, and good for nothing but shrieks of pain. Besides, I hadn't five or six good hours of daylight to waste; it was for me a matter of life or death to get down to the valley before sunset.

Now that I stood up I began to examine my lodgings. It was a buttress of the mountain—a tiny ledge of piled-up rocks, communicating with one flank of Aconcagua by a steep gully of hard snow, which fell away precipitously a little way below me. All the other approaches to the buttress were sheer precipices.

As I looked at this crow's nest I marvelled how I got there in safety. Blundering along in the snowy darkness there were a thousand chances to one that I had slipped down that steep *couloir* on to the gleaming snows far beneath. I had only about twenty yards of the gully to cross before it merged in the easy snow slope beyond. Those twenty yards cost me an hour's hard labour. In the first place the blizzard had not improved my nerve; and in the second my frostbitten fingers prevented my wielding the ice-axe with any great skill. I funked the business most thoroughly, but it had to be done if I was to get home. I dragged myself over the place at the rate of a foot a minute, making cavernous footholds for my cumbrous feet, and going more delicately than ever went Agag. But at last I got across, and sat down and returned thanks.

It was now six o'clock, and for two and a half hours I walked steadily downhill, keeping the approximate direction by means of the curved peak of Cuerno, near the base of which the 16,000-foot camp had been pitched. The fresh-fallen snow made the going rather easier than it had been the day before; but there were many places where the wind had swept it off the hard surface beneath, and these transitions gave me several awkward falls. Every nail had come out of my boots, and it was impossible

to stand on the hard snow. I repeated my involuntary tobogganing experience of the previous evening on one occasion, and somehow or other, in my effort to put on the drag, I cut a chunk out of my cheek with the ice-axe. Before I had gone very far I pulled up in the soft snow. During this descent my feet began to assert themselves; insubordination developed into flat mutiny. The increasing power of the sun was slowly thawing them out, and I found the process extremely unpleasant. I cannot hope to describe the pain, but I believe it is almost the same as that experienced by people who are burned. About half-past eight I saw a sight which made me pinch myself to find out whether I was awake or not. There, far below me, a dot of colour on the snow, was a little green tent. So far did I seem to have come, and so low down on the mountain, by comparison with Cuerno, did the tent appear, that I at once assumed that it was the 16,000-foot camp. I was wrong; it was the 19,000-foot camp, and when I was a couple of hundred yards away I managed to raise a shout, and immediately Anacleto and José came tumbling out, the latter brandishing the remnants of the *vino*. I felt inclined to brain the ruffian with my axe. At the moment I held him responsible for all my woes, the snowstorm included. Anacleto's eyes were better, but the poor fellow was in a state of great concern. As he told Dr. Cotton when he got back, " Nosotros lo miravemos como muerto " (" We looked upon him as a dead man "). The storm had descended on the men as well as on me, and they, with their large experience of blizzards at great altitudes, had never known a man exposed to one survive.

We wasted no time in useless palaver; I did not go inside the tent at all. Anacleto produced a blanket and hitched it on his back, and that was all the baggage we took with us.

The two men did all they could to make things easy

for me. They supported me on either side, and simply pulled me over the snow. When we came to a steep face Anacleto put down the blanket, seated himself in front, and put me behind him, while José sat behind me. Then José shoved off, and we dashed down the slope at lightning speed. I enjoyed the sensation immensely; it was such a relief to be off my feet. At eleven we reached the base camp, after a toboggan which seemed likely to end in destruction. It was fine to see Anacleto dash his heels into the snow and stop us dead in mid-career, just as we were at the steep verge of the glacier. After this came a short walk, which just about finished me off; I could hardly move over the icy puddles of the moraine, and Anacleto had to pull me into the tent. There I thought I would eat something; I tried a biscuit, and then a bit of chocolate, but to me they both reeked foully of kerosene, and I trod them under foot in disgust. Then I fancied a pipe would do me good. I had taken no tobacco at all up the mountain in order to keep my lungs at the top of their condition, and I felt a great longing for a smoke. But the first whiff almost made me sick: it was the kerosene again in gaseous form. I threw away my pipe and groaned. The next thing was to get a horse and go home. I found Manuel looking little the worse for his two days' surfeiting, and bade him go down the valley to where Ramón was pasturing his animals and fetch me back a horse with all possible speed. Then I drank about a bucketful of icy water, and felt much better. Suddenly I caught sight of a gruesome reflection in a small hanging glass. My face was literally black with sunburn, all except the tip of my nose, which was white, being frost-bitten; my lips were bigger than any negro's, cracked and bleeding; there was an open wound down my left cheek, from which the blood had congealed in ribbons to my throat. A six days' beard completed the picture.

Having nothing to do I went outside and rubbed my

frost-bitten fingers with snow. Much to my astonishment, Anacleto came up with deprecating gestures and begged me to desist. It is a singular thing that these *peons*, who spend their winters combating frost-bite in the Cumbre, are ignorant of, or despise, the only remedy that is of any avail.

In about half an hour the worthy Ramón brought up several horses, and also his brother, whom I had not seen before, as he was not in my employ. For some occult reason this brother was sent home with me, Ramón instructing me that he answered to the same name as himself. I could not help admiring the consistency of the parents of the two Ramóns; but what ghastly confusion there must have been at home? Before I had time to ask Ramón whether he had any more brothers of the same name I had been hoisted into the saddle, and received the parting salute of my awed retainers.

I gather that they regarded me as an uncanny individual who had leagued with the powers of darkness to escape death. There I left them, and saw them no more. Poor Anacleto! You were a rare good man of your feet once upon a time, and you are better than most now; but I fear the chief constituent of those tears the snow-blindness wrung from you was *aguardiente*!

The man who habitually drinks too much alcohol may do far grander things, but he will not climb Aconcagua.

It took us just six hours to ride from the 16,000-foot camp to Inca. Ramón the less led the way, and my trusty little pony followed. I could take very little interest in them or in anything else, for the pain in my feet, now heated by the vertical rays of a powerful sun, had become almost intolerable. On and on we went without any particular incident until we came to the Paso Malo. There Ramón dismounted and led his mule, while I sat still on my horse and watched them clinging to the narrow ledge above the rocky pool. One of our mules,

who ought to have been feeding quietly miles away, suddenly appeared alongside, and rudely pushed past me on to the tiny track. The next thing I saw was Ramón's mule falling with the sound of rattling stones towards the torrent. Luckily she brought up on a sandy buttress, and stood there quivering. Ramón could do nothing to help her; but after a minute or two she jumped like a cat on to a rock beneath her, and thence on to safe ground. Now Ramón came back and pulled me off my horse, drove him safely over the pass, and then came back and helped me to follow on foot. I walked like an old, old man; my knees trembled with the agony of supporting my body on those gangrened lumps of corruption that had been my feet.

The stray mule came back to meet us, and nearly knocked us both into the abyss, and now the laconic Ramón lapsed for once into unparliamentary language. But it was all over in a few minutes, and I got on my horse again—for the last time. Twice we forded the river side by side without mishap, and the end of the journey, where the grass-clad valley widened near the little lake, seemed close at hand. All the way down the valley I had heard the most entrancing music; the air seemed vibrant with the melodies of an unseèn aërial orchestra; I could hear the diapasons of the deep bassoons and the insistent clang of the trombones fused into harmony by the pleading voices of the violins. And yet I could hardly keep from tears. I should see her again now, after all; but how nearly had that kiss by the hotel steps been our last! The tears would run now; I groaned; but fortunately Ramón did not look back.

By this time he was quite used to the sound.

Note.—On December 20 all the writer's toes were amputated about two inches behind the metatarsal phalangeal joints.

PIG-STICKING AT JODHPUR

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March 14, 1898.

NE'S first day's pig-sticking is an episode in one's life deserving faithful record. A round-shouldered barrister-at-law can hope for few such halcyon hours. We were to have started yesterday, and N. and I got up heroically at half-past 4 a.m. and devoured a hasty *chota-hazri*. By the time we had finished a *babu* arrived from Sir Pertab Singh to tell us that there was no *khubbar* (news) of pig, and that therefore we couldn't hunt.

You can imagine our disappointment; N. was furious; for in this country she can never get enough sleep, and consequently grudges every hour spent out of Bedfordshire. She retired to rest once more, and I waited for the pale dawn. Then I went out with my friend the *Jemadar* buck-shooting, and managed to secure a beauty—12½ inches. 'Twas a dexterous drive conducted by the *Jemadar* and our two hunters. But that is another story.

Last night we gave Tommy the strictest orders to call us at 4.45 a.m., and he was heard swearing at the *chaukidar* late into the night his injunctions as to his own awakening by that drowsy guardian of our slumbers. He might just as well have told the gate post to call him, for I suppose nothing in nature sleeps sounder about four o'clock in the morning than an Indian watchman.

I had already given this *budmash* (scamp) of a fellow my watch, hoping that it might stimulate him into punctuality; or that at any rate its dial might make him

ashamed when he came an hour or so late. But it is difficult to get the better of a Hindu. Tommy is never up at the right time; but when I greet him with a storm of damnation he calmly pulls out his watch and shows me the hands pointing to the exact hour I ordered him to call us. The first time this happened I was appeased, although I thought it curious that my watch had lost so much; the second time my suspicions were aroused, for I had carefully set the watch by N.'s the night before, and the watch was incapable of losing an hour in a night. The third time I openly accused Tommy of setting the hands back, and warned him that a good licking lay in store for him if he repeated the offence. He swore by all his gods and goddesses that he is innocent, but I know that he lied in his throat.

What monumental liars and knaves these common Hindus are! Six weeks in their vicinity is enough to destroy all belief in their honesty. This morning was like unto all others as far as Tommy went; he did not appear till a quarter past five; but curiously enough I awoke of my own accord at exactly a quarter to five (the time we were to have been called); for I struck a "striker," as these beastly phosphorus matches are euphoniously called in this country, and after a villainous candle had taken five minutes to light I saw by N.'s watch that it was exactly ten minutes to the hour. My brother Charles possesses this faculty of waking at will; but I never succeeded in hitting off the right moment until to-day. It is a very curious process of what physiologists would doubtless call "unconscious cerebration," and seems to prove, not only that our brains are never entirely dead to impression, even in our soundest sleep, but also (which is much more curious) that we possess a spiritual personality so capable of disjunction from our bodies as to be able to quit the inert frame, ascertain the time, and return and wake the sleeping

brain. Or if you prefer to think that the spiritual personality knows the time by intuition, and has no need to peep into the watch that is lying near, it only seems to me to make the phenomenon still more wonderful. It is one of the few intrinsic and yet entirely convincing proofs that we have of the existence within us of a *particula divinae aurae* that does not die when the body is dead.

About six o'clock, Hari Singh, Sir Pratab's A.D.C. and chief ally, and a nephew of the Maharaja (whose name I forget, but it must have ended in Singh; they all do hereabouts) drove up in a barouche, and we all drove off in the dusk.

It was so warm that I wore no coat over my thin khaki gaberdine and flannel shirt, which shows that the hot weather is already upon us. Only ten days ago in Bandelkhand I used to go out at the same time in a couple of shirts and a coat and waistcoat of thickest Scotch stuff, and walking hard my hands used to get so frozen that I could hardly hold my rifle when it became necessary to take it from the shikari. People are sadly wrong who think that India is never cold. Lady Dufferin, with her usual wit, once remarked that she never knew what it was to be cold till she came to India.

Hari Singh was dressed in European fashion, with brown field boots and drab breeches of quite Sandonian cut. In his right boot he had stuck an enormous dirk with an agate handle which he told me he used in times of extremity, when the pig had knocked his horse over and his spear was broken and he was on the ground. Once, he said, a pig had cut his boots as he lay prone. It was at such moments that a hanger came in useful.

The Maharaja's nephew was a very good-looking young man, who wore the composite garment generally affected, I notice, by native soldiers and sportsmen. It is like

a well-fitting pair of riding breeches continued right over the calf and down the leg to the foot, on which an ordinary boot or shoe is worn. It is a costume at once smart and workmanlike; equally good for riding or walking, and very neat. Some of these fellows' legs are so thin, and their breeches fit so tightly round their ankles that I wonder how they ever get into them; and getting out of them must be a still greater work. Scotsmen are said to have adopted their national kilt on account of the difficulty they experience in getting their feet through trousers of normal size; but Hindu gentlemen are influenced by no such slovenly considerations: I should like to see the morning tussle between a really smart Rajput and his breeches.*

Both these gentlemen wore the European *topi* or sun helmet, and coming home Hari Singh put on a pair of sun spectacles. We drove about four miles out into the flat sea of sand that surrounds Jodhpur, keeping a ridge of rocky hills close on our right, while the eastern sky grew red as the sun came up.

After Hari Singh had consumed about ten cigarettes we overtook the horses, all of them Arabs ridden by syces with yellow turbans and khaki clothes, carrying two or three spears apiece. The heads of the spears were carefully covered with leather cases, with laces to hold them to the shaft. Hari Singh called to the grooms to mount us quickly, and just as he did so we felt a sudden jerk, and realised that one of the front wheels had given way. I never saw such a complete breakdown. The tire came off, the spokes fell out, and the axle split in pieces.

However, the carriage had considerately lasted out the distance it was meant to go, and we got on our horses at once. N. was given a fiery-looking chestnut Arab stallion, with a mouth described by both Hari Singh and herself as perfection itself. Hari Singh was going

* Now, 1930, universally known as "Jodhpurs."—R.R.

to ride a small brown Waler that had never been ridden after pig before; the young prince's first mount I didn't notice. My own steed was a light golden chestnut Arab, not particularly handsome; neither so strong as N.'s nor so speedy-looking as Hari Singh's Waler; but wasn't he just a ripper? I never rode any horse with so perfect a mouth; all the Jodhpur horses seem to be perfect in that respect. As for my mount's speed, I soon discovered that he was a good deal the fastest horse out, and far easier to manipulate than any of the others.

The first time one takes a spear in one's hand one is rather appalled at its length, which, however, doesn't prevent one having qualms as to where the point will go next—whether into one's horse's ears, one's own foot, or a friend's body. Hari Singh showed me that the proper way to hold it was across the horse at right angles to his body, with most of its length sticking out on the near side. The reins can thus be held with both hands, the right hand also holding the spear, and when the spear is brought into action the reins are gathered up in the left hand, the spear is swung over the horse's head from left to right and brought to the charge by holding it a good deal nearer the butt than the centre and keeping the right arm rigid and perpendicular. This last holds good, for the method of attack is your horse going fast; but the Jodhpur spears are very light, and unless you are travelling at top speed (when the mere momentum will send your spear through poor piggy) it is necessary to give a horizontal "jab" or thrust to get the most effective possible stroke.

The country we rode into was absolutely flat in all directions but one; and there the view was bounded by a ridge of rocky hills—the sanctuary of the porcine tribe—whence they descend at night to feed in the plain, and whither they return before the sun is hot.

A rough grass of the usual yellow, burnt-up type grew patchily over the plain, dotted thickly with stunted shrubs and trees of prickly *khika*, which added to the fun of riding considerably, for one's horse jumped the bushes in grand style, and carried one's head and spear into a tree before one knew what was happening. The pig was his objective, and straight after the pig he went. There were a few obstacles beside the bushes. We came across two or three high sand ridges like huge golf bunkers—sloping on one side but rather steep on the other; a small dry water-course (nullah) with steep banks about three feet high and about ten feet apart; an aqueduct built of masonry rising to the height of a small wall, but very much broader, and, last but not least, a large area cut up into deep holes and ridges, where somebody had evidently been quarrying for something or other. Everywhere were patches of ground torn up into shallow holes and ridges by the delving swine—holes which might easily have brought a clumsy horse on to his nose. Even my Arab pecked in one once.

There were men posted all over the country on the watch for sounders of pig, and a squadron of camels scattered about acted as towers of observation. It wasn't long before we heard a great shouting, and knew that the game was afoot. Hari Singh dashed off at a tremendous pace, with me as near him as I could get, and the young prince and N. behind us; a crowd of syces carrying spears bringing up the rear.

Suddenly the pig came in sight, travelling at right angles to our direction; a sounder of all sizes and sexes containing at least fifteen to twenty individuals. There was no need to pick out the biggest boar; one huge brute with bristly chine and curling tushes towered above the rest; and at him went Hari Singh as hard as he could go. The young prince didn't show up much in this first race, and Hari Singh and I had a grand ride

for first spear. He got off with a better start than I did, but the pig was big and heavy, and soon took to jinking in little dashes of about thirty yards each way. Then my horse came in; he was as quick at turning as a cat, and very fast, and I soon took the lead. On went the boar across the little nullah I have mentioned, and I thought at first my horse would jump the whole thing; but he seemed to change his mind, and dropped in and out again as cleverly as a hunter does the cradle-jump in a show-ring at home.

We had now gone about half a mile, and piggy was beginning to get a trifle sick of it. There was a nice flat bit of ground the far side of the nullah, and I crammed the chestnut on and swung my spear over his head and brought it to the charge. Then came the glorious sensation that cavalry feel when they close up to a flying foe. The chestnut snorted and bounded on, and the next second the steel went swishing into the quarters of the boar. He gave vent to a horrid series of grunts, and gnashed his gleaming tushes with rage and pain, but he didn't stop, so with a quick backward jerk I pulled out the spear and thrust it, by a rather badly placed stroke, right through the small part of his near hind leg above the hock. He didn't stop even for that insult, but he jinked off sharp to the right, and I was going too fast to turn before Hari Singh usurped my position.

The latter then had great sport. Piggy turned to bay as he came up, and charged in. Hari Singh met him as he came on with a gallant thrust that made horse and pig reel; but the bamboo shaft couldn't stand the strain, and crash! it broke in two, one end sticking in the pig's flank for a second before it fell out and the other remaining in Hari Singh's right hand.

Hari Singh flung the useless butt away as he passed and shouted to a syce to bring him another spear; while

as he did so the infuriated animal jumped like lightning at his horse, with that quick upward jerk of the head which does the tushes' murderous work. Then he turned and made one last dash for the hills and life, with the young prince and a crowd of syces prodding him ineffectually from every side. Their thrusts were flea-bites compared to Hari Singh's powerful deliveries, and the pig didn't think it worth while to stop and attack such contemptible assailants.

Hari Singh had seized another spear in a second, and now he chased down at full tilt from a flank. That was a mighty blow—the spear went clean through the boar's vitals behind the ribs and stuck out—all the steel and six inches of bloody wood—on the other side. The pig jumped in the air, and pulled the butt of the spear out of Hari Singh's hand; for he could not draw it out again. There stood the gallant boar, a most piteous sight, the blood streaming from both flanks, which heaved in long sobs and made the transfixing spear-shaft quiver. He squealed, too, in a low and unearthly way, more like the mewing of a kitten in distress than the ordinary deep bass, snorting grunt of a wild pig. Thus he stood quietly, as though conscious of the inevitable approach of death, for a moment or two, then sank gently on his side. Hari Singh plunged a sharp spear into his heart, and so he died.

Hari Singh's untried horse had behaved splendidly, and had received an honourable wound about four inches long on the inside edge of the off hind leg, two hands or so above the hock. It was fortunately not very deep, but bled a great deal and looked a very nasty wound. We took over the horse as we came home and he went rather lame. I hope so gallant a little Waler will not allow the memory of the injury received in his first run after a pig to deter him from coming to close quarters in the next.

My nag was evidently a very old hand at the game, and had probably had some very hard knocks from boars in time past; for he distinctly objected to gallop up to the pig when he stood at bay after Hari Singh's first encounter with him. I felt my horse shutting up like a concertina at every stride that brought him nearer his foe; but I had no spurs and was in his power. He evidently considered he had done enough in getting me first spear, and preferred to look on and see the young entry blooded, if there was any blooding to be done. I found he did just the same in the next run, so if ever I ride him again I am going to "remind" him violently of my intention to spear the pig and not merely to prick him.

N. saw a great deal of this chase, riding behind on her golden Arab, but I noticed she turned away when the poor pig had got his death wound, as if unable to witness his agony. It was in truth a gruesome sight.

There was a very short interval between the two runs. Hari Singh had hardly polished off the first pig before we heard the welcome shout two hundred yards or so out in the plain, and on galloping up I saw a single pig making off to the right towards the hills. I shouted to Hari Singh to know if I should go after him, and he told me not to, and kept on.

Then I saw what he did—another immense sounder heading straight down upon us, and he shouted: "Wait till I pick out the boar." The frightened pigs streamed by—the porkers and the most active of their mamas leading, grunting and shoving for all they were worth.

Towards the end came a good boar, taller and thinner than the first, and looking just the sort to give a long run. Hari Singh dashed on to him, and quickly detached him from the rest; and he went off at a great pace, with Hari Singh and the young prince close behind him, and me a good way behind. He took a line to save his

skin into some very bushy country, dodging and jinking in a wonderful way, so that my spear and head were constantly getting knocked into trees. But these tactics of his were just the ones to give me a chance; the prince's white mare was a bit of a puller, and Hari Singh's fresh mount was not near so handy as mine.

I gradually took advantage of his jinks to get front place, and then I let the Arab fly over a good bit of ground. Just as he butted through a narrow passage in a sandbank I smote him violently in the hinder parts, and thus secured first spear for the second time. He grunted horribly, and dashed to one side down a steep place. Hari Singh shouted to me to be careful, and I saw that the ground over which the pig was travelling slowly was a honeycomb of quarry holes about six feet deep, separated from one another by little ridges, along which the pig was going. Hari Singh and the prince made a circuit to the right to avoid all this; but I foolishly kept straight on after the pig's tracks, which necessitated going very slow, and even then I nearly fell into a hole.

All this time the main sounder of pig had been pursuing us, enraged no doubt at our cavalier treatment of their parent, lord and master. N., who was behind, said that what happened was one of the funniest things she'd ever seen. The pigs came to one of the big holes in their path, and jumped it beautifully, all except an unfortunate little porker who jumped mightily as far as he was able, but that wasn't as far as the opposite bank, and down he came an awful smack on his back in the middle of the hole, and lay there squeaking lustily, fancying his last hour was come. At length, finding that he was not so severely damaged as he expected, he got up with his eyes full of sand and made off at best speed after his relations.

I lost a lot of ground over the identical quarry-holes which detained master piggy-wiggy, and when I got to

the end of them I found that Hari Singh and the prince had already negotiated an intervening aqueduct close on the pig's tail. They had easily cut him off, while I had with difficulty followed him. When I came up I found that Hari Singh had given one of his famous thrusts and that there was little more to be done. It was all over bar squealing. I thought it worth while to have a prod while the pig still stood up—merely for the practice of the thing, and I roared to an intervening syce to clear out of the way. But my knowing little horse played me the same trick again. He refused to gallop at the pig; and I collopped up to him in a half-hearted way that would have courted disaster if piggy had had any go left in him. Fortunately he hadn't, and my lame jab bowled him over. He never rose again.

When we got home, after a capital gallop across country, Hari Singh showed us the stables. He and Sir Pratab Singh are brothers-in-law, and apparently keep a joint establishment. They had got a hundred and fifty horses between them, Hari Singh told us. The stables are built on three sides of a long oblong; the entrace gate, crowned with two guardian stone horses, being on the fourth side. We found about sixty horses being groomed; a process which an Indian syce effects chiefly by massaging with his hands and the outside of his forearm. They use a currycomb too, but I saw no dandies or wisps at work. Nearly all the horses were under 13.2—the Indian polo maximum, being chiefly polo ponies, but there were a few 14.1 Arabs and Walers, and two or three very smart English ponies which Sir Pratab and Hari Singh had brought out from England after the Jubilee of 1897.

The Arabs, which were a splendid lot of animals in splendid condition, had been all imported direct from Arabia; and I learned that an average pony cost about Rs. 370, or (with the rupee at 1*s.* 4*d.*) about £24 13*s.* 4*d.*

in Jodhpur, a sum thus including his purchase money, carriage from Aden to Bombay by sea and from Bombay to Jodhpur—a distance of close on six hundred miles—by rail. To those who bid for Arabs at Tattersall's the figure will seem ridiculously low.

Maswar is a land expressly designed for horses; and the Maswarians—chief amongst them Sir Pratab Singh—live for nothing but the training and use of horses in war and sport. Maswar is the opposite of Ithaca, as described by Achilles when he refused Agamemnon's gift of horses,

> "Non est aptus equis Ithacae locus; ut neque planis
> Porrectus spatiis, nec multae prodigus herbae.
> Atreide, magis apta tibi tua dona relinquam."

And I suppose that nowhere in the wide world is the science of horse-training better understood or more perseveringly applied.

Every morning at an early hour Sir Pratab and his brother-in-law go and stand on a raised platform that he has had built a stone's throw from his house, and every horse in the stable is paraded for his inspection. He examines them all critically; prescribes their exercise, food and work for the day, and then watches them go through their various trainings. Some are sent for slow gallops round the race-course; others are practised with stick and ball on the polo ground close by; and others are put through a course of correction for their various misdemeanours or bad habits. I asked Mr. L., a young engineer, how it was that all the Jodhpur horses had such good mouths. He told me that it was due to Sir Pratab's peculiar and unsurpassed methods of breaking. One of them, he said, consisted in putting a very severe bit in a puller's mouth and a strong boy on his back, and then trotting him very slowly through heavy sand.

Suddenly, without any warning to his horse, the boy would put all his strength into a jerk on the sharp bit, and the animal would go on to his haunches. The boy would make him stand on the same spot for perhaps five minutes without moving; and then, suddenly again, he would lean forward quickly, seize one rein close to the bit and wrench the horse round to a flank with the utmost violence. The whole process would be repeated perhaps sixty times in a morning, by the end of which the poor brute's mouth would be jagged and bleeding; but he would stop the very second he felt that the boy was going to pull him up.

After that kind of treatment a slight warning would be as effectual as the most violent action. A wink is as good as a nod to a blind horse; and, at Jodhpur, a touch is as good as a jag to a puller.

A device for curing ball-shy ponies was new to me. A ball as big as a football attached to a string was trailed about the ground by one man, while another rode the ball-shy pony, at some distance behind it, for a considerable time. Gradually the distance between the pony and the ball would be decreased, until at last he came right up to it; and then the rider would tap the ball very gently with his stick. It was said to be a perfect cure.

The subject of polo in India is a fascinating one, and I wish that somebody would write its history. George Curzon, in his book "The Indus and the Source of the Oxus," says that the game was originally played over a very large part of Hindustan; that the Mahommedan waves of invasion drove it out of the plains into the mountains of the north; and that when the English came to India it survived only in the barbarous hill-states of Mauipur and Hanza Nagar, whence they re-imported it to the plains whereon it had once flourished.

This account bears the stamp of intrinsic truth, for

the Indian princes and nobles seem to have a natural ability for the game which may well be the posthumous outcropping of a transmitted skill long dormant in the persons of their more immediate ancestors.

I have rarely experienced a pleasure in watching a game equal to that of seeing a good native polo player. English players are sometimes as good (though very seldom), but they never acquire the grace and ease that distinguish the Indian. The latter's wrist is as supple as a piece of gutta-percha, which enables him to use his stick with inconceivable quickness; so that at last it seems a matter of indifference to him whether the ball is on the off or the near side; he will hit it, and hit it as full and true, though travelling at top speed, and harassed and impeded by a fellow trying to ride him off, as if he were knocking about for practice and taking his own time.

There is a man called Dokel, one of the Jodhpur team, who is a marvel in all these respects; he is probably the finest back in the world.

As Englishmen we are rather apt to think ourselves always *facile principes* at whatever sport or game we take up; but as yet we cannot beat the Indians at the game we took from them and gave back to them again.

A competent judge told me that if the Durham Light Infantry, who are the best team in India now,* and have been for two or three years past, were to play Jodhpur, they would probably get well beaten. That is to say, the best native team would beat the best English team; and the same thing would hold good amongst lower grade players. At Patiala, watching a mixed game of natives and Englishmen, it soon became apparent to the most unscientific onlooker that the natives were all the best players. They possess the ease which betokens consummate mastery of the art. An

* 1898.—R.R.

English subaltern rides off as if he were making a cavalry charge, a whirling mass of gesticulating arms and legs; a native is always calm and undemonstrative, riding as if to overtake a lady in the Row.

Then again an English player hits the ball with the whole weight of his arm thrown into the stroke; a native twists his wrist and the ball flies hurtling into space. Another direction in which national characteristics come out is the view men take of their duties when not actually riding off or hitting the ball. The Britisher is so excited that he gallops furiously after the ball, wherever it may be, and thus generally manages to avoid getting on to it altogether; the Indian ambles slowly about on the edge of the ground watching his chance, and when the chance comes he is off like an eagle. I have often noticed that when the bell rings at the end of a " chukker " a stranger might be able to tell the ponies which had been ridden by Englishmen from those which had been ridden by natives; the former are always in a lather, whereas the latter are not. This may be partly accounted for, of course, by the fact that Englishmen are generally heavier than natives; but not altogether I think.

In many kingdoms of the world men of low birth have attained to the highest offices of the State by reason of their administrative capacity as rulers, their wit or beauty as courtiers, or their power and influence as demagogues.

At Patiala and Jodhpur the world lies at the feet of the man who excels on the polo ground. It does not matter whether a man is a sweeper, and the son of a sweeper; if he can play polo well enough to make his inclusion in the first team a matter of policy, his future is assured.

Naturally, when a man plays polo so well that his presence on the ground every evening is essential to the happiness of the Maharaja and his nobles, it is necessary

to give him a definite status befitting his dignity as a mighty polo player. It would never do for a stranger visiting a native State to ask: "Who is that famous Number Two?" and to be told, "Oh, that is Natu, the *masolchi*" (scullery-knave), or: "That is Ram Dass, the *metar*" (sweeper), "the finest Number One in India."

The finest Number Two in India has a position to keep up; and if he has no position it is necessary to invent one for him. Consequently many men who spent their early youth in washing up and sweeping, and their adolescence in polo playing, have found themselves in early manhood saddled with all the dignities and duties of a general or a prime minister.

I met a man in Patiala who was reputed to be of the lowest birth, but at twenty-four had played himself into the command of all the military forces of the State. He was a huge success in every way; assiduous in business, bright and merry in demeanour; popular, well-mannered, and, of course, a magnificent rider and sportsman.

No one could possibly have detected any difference between him and the other nobles, except that he appeared rather nobler than the rest.

I should think that regiments like the Durhams made polo a very paying concern; and men like Sir Pratab Singh, if they chose to put their ponies on the market (which they seldom or never do), could always command a high price for them.

You remember the figure that imported Arabs cost in Jodhpur; well, I was informed at Jodhpur that the Maharaja bought seven ponies from the Durhams at the finish of the inter-regimental tournament, and was considered to have got them cheap at Rs. 12,000. A pony is known to have fetched as much as Rs. 3000 in India. If a man can buy a pony for £30 and sell it

again at £150 he is in a fair way to make money. Sir Pratab's reputation as a player is so great that any pony known to have been ridden by him is certain to fetch a big price. I saw a grey named after him, which he had given to an English officer, sold at Tattersall's for over £250, if I recollect aright, while the English ponies sold at the same time were a good deal cheaper, allowing £100 for the cost of transport from India to England. Nevertheless, a good English pony is the best polo pony in the world; faster than the Arab, and keener, if not quite so handy. Sir Pratab has several English ponies, and prizes them very highly; one of them was a confirmed runaway at Hurlingham when he first saw it; he got on its back and it played perfectly. He bought it, brought it to India, and it is now his best pony, and does not pull an ounce.

But Sir Pratab has probably the best hands in the world. That is the point in which all Englishmen are inferior to native riders—in "hands." One appreciates the fact directly one gets on to their ponies; their mouths are so light that a player accustomed to English horses is continually stopping them without meaning to do so; and such a man eagerly asks to be allowed to ride any pony that has the reputation of "catching hold" a bit. It is a beautiful sight to see a good Indian player stop suddenly and turn after galloping the whole length of the ground at full speed. There is none of the "pony on his haunches, rider on his neck" sort of business. There is such perfect response between the horse's mouth and the rider's hand that the former does not, in process of time, grow callous from the unnecessary force employed by the latter; it is as though touch became refined into speech between horse and rider, speech in which requests are made in the gentlest tones and answered in the most willing spirit.

But I seem to have wandered far from the stables,

where Hari Singh was showing us his equine friends. There were two things there that struck me as peculiar to the place. One was the fact that none of the horses was tied by the heels with ropes, like the vast majority of native horses; or, in fact, all horses, whether owned by Europeans or natives, where the native syce reigns paramount in the stable. The practice is an ugly and disfiguring one, and I cannot tell you what use it is. Horses often develop enlarged pasterns from the friction of the rope, and blemishes and loss of hair are the common results of it. The horse can kick just as well with the ropes as without them, and as he is tied by the head as well as by the heels the hind fastening is not intended to supplant the better method of attachment. It seems to be merely a senseless adaptation of the cavalry device for picketing large numbers of horses in a restricted area in the open, where it is necessary to prevent them moving from side to side, in order to avert the possibility of their kicking one another.

In a stable with wide separate stalls the horses cannot get at one another, and consequently the *raison d'être* of the hind fastening disappears; but the syce is the servant of *dastur* or custom; and it is sufficient for him to know that both his father and his paternal grandfather tied horses by the legs.

I have often watched a horse tied in this way in the open trying to get at a tempting wisp that lies just outside his reach. Having got to the full extent of his tether, he paddles forward with his fore legs till his hind ones are curved out behind him in a great arc, suggestive of paralysis and total incapacity.

The other thing peculiar to the yard was a sounder of wild pig; at least they had been wild in their youth, but seemed as tame and peaceful as the common or garden pig of the farmyard at home. They differ from the pig in the stalls at Jaipur in that there were half

a dozen of them; they were quite loose and free to run hither and thither as they liked, and, for them, they were quite tame. We scratched their huge snouts in a friendly way and were received in the same spirit; and the horses regarded them as a man regards his fox-terriers.

What Dr. Johnson said of a Scotchman apparently applies with equal force to a wild pig: much may be done with him if only you catch him young enough. (Perhaps Dr. Johnson would have said that there is much affinity between the two beasts, which makes the analogy less startling.)

Hari Singh kept two enormous wild pigs in a sty apart from the horses; the boar was the hugest I ever beheld. We looked through a little window about three feet from the ground, and when Hari produced some *roti* (bread) from his pocket, the terrific beast raised himself on to the sill, his huge snout resting on his forepaws, and placidly munched the bread Hari shovelled into his mouth. His tushes were wondrous big; but the monster seemed as gentle as a dove. One thing about him both N. and I remarked at once. His eyes were large, quite unpig-like and of a lovely deep hazel brown; I never saw more beautiful eyes on any animal. One imagines pig's eyes to be necessarily squinting hideosities; but this monarch of the hills must have stolen the heart of many a timorous sowlet by one single glance of those fascinating orbs.

After we had made the great boar jump up to eat bread out of our hands till we were fully convinced of his obedience, his docility and his agility, we went on to another part of the stables, where a dividing wall separated two alleys, across which walls of different heights were built. Here, every morning at twelve o'clock, the jumpers were practised; and one of them was led out to give us an exhibition. He jumped the

low wall first, about three feet six inches, and came back over the high one, which was about five feet, without touching either. The little beggar could only have measured about thirteen hands.

Hari Singh told us that his best jumper had cleared six feet six inches, which is a very big jump, even for a riderless horse. I fancy Jack Mytton once jumped some park railings six feet high; and that is supposed to be the record jump for a ridden horse. But Mytton's horse was no doubt sixteen hands; and these little Arabs or country-breds are never more than fourteen.

However, jumping power doesn't seem to be connected with height; for I remember seeing a thirteen-two pony jump higher and bigger with a boy on his back at a show than any of the big horses there.

Simla, March 23rd, 1898. *Louie's Hotel.*

My dear G.,

I must write and tell you of our great ghost story at Jodhpur; it is a tale of hair-erecting awfulness, and must not be read within five hours of going to bed. The house we were given, all to ourselves, was quite a big one for India, with a staircase and sitting rooms upstairs, and all kinds of English contrivances. It stood right opposite Sir Pratab's house and resembled it much in style—a flat-roofed, balconied, balustraded edifice. Downstairs you walked from a porch into a sitting room with our dining room on the right and an ante-room on the left. Opposite the porch entrance was a door leading on to a landing from which the staircase curled upwards to another sitting room (which we used) having a bedroom on its right, opening into it (ours) and another similar room on its left, also opening into it. On either side of our bedroom were two balconies with high walls of fretted stonework completely shutting off all access

from outside. At the end of the bedroom two doors led into our respective bathrooms, and these had doors opening on to the same shut-in balcony, through which a small wooden door led on to a stone staircase communicating with the courtyard below. This small postern had no latch on the inside, and so allowed anyone to get on to the balcony outside our bathrooms; but if we locked our bathroom doors, and also the doors from the sitting room into the unoccupied bedroom and on to the staircase, we were completely shut off from the world.

The first night at Jodhpur we went to bed about ten o'clock, and there was a slight breeze blowing, which made the air delightfully cool. Just after we had got into bed we heard a great banging noise—the noise of a door that is being blown violently about. I thought nothing of it at all, but remarked to N. that it was strange that so slight a breeze should be able to move the outside door about so violently. I suggested that it would be better to shut it, not knowing at that time that it had no lock on the inside. So, very cross, I got out of my warm beddy-bye and made for the bathroom. All this time the door kept on banging, banging. I got into the bathroom and peered out into the night, and I at once recognised that there was not enough wind to blow a candle out, much less play battledore and shuttlecock with a wooden door. So I began to suspect human agency, and undid the bolts of the bathroom door leading on to the outside balcony as noiselessly as I could. Then I bolted across the narrow intervening space, threw the postern open and looked out. There, sure enough, were two figures in white turbans, noiselessly disappearing down the steps below. It was a moonlit night, and I can swear to the white turbans. I had no gun in my hand, nor yet a water jug, or I assuredly would have discharged some missile at them. Perhaps if I had bagged one of them in the leg with an express

bullet there would have been less scepticism next morning amongst the household as to the reality of our midnight visitors. I had no shoes on my feet, and I did not know the country, so I stayed where I was and shouted: "*Jao budmash*" ("Begone, villains"). It was rather a weak thing to do, but all I could think of at the time. But I am heartily glad I did not rush down the steps after them, for next morning I discovered that there was a landing on the steps, halfway down, with no parapet to guide the unwary, and a sheer drop off it of some twelve feet. The steps took an awkward and unexpected turn from the landing, and instead of going straight on, they curled round in a puzzling way. If I had run down the steps full tilt in the dark after the white turbans, in all probability I should have skimmed over the landing into vacancy, and broken my legs in five or six places.

I made a fuss about the affair next morning; but with no result. As I expected, everybody said it was impossible; there was a *chaukidar* (watchman) on every side of the house, and the servants who wore white turbans established alibis completely to their own satisfaction.

I never expected to solve the mystery, and I didn't. To this day I am uncertain as to the nature and object of our visitors. Certainly there were *chaukidars* all round the house; and I don't think anyone in Jodhpur would have dared to play practical jokes on Sir Pratab's guests. If they were intent on thieving, why call attention to themselves by making a row? Did they want thus to attract my attention in order to cajole me over the edge of the staircase to my death, what time they disposed of N. and plundered our goods? Lastly, were they men or ghosts? In the light of subsequent events I am bound to confess that I firmly believe that on the night of Friday, March 11th, 1898, I saw my first ghost!

The noise was not repeated that night, and for three days and nights we lived and slept in peace and safety, so that N. quite forgot her scare when I told her of the turbaned visitors who banged the door. No one would ever think of ghosts in India; there are no old houses, crooked passages, shut-up wings, legends, gossiping housekeepers, timorous housemaids, or any other of the thousand and one time-honoured Western agencies for perpetuating ghostly fears. We stuck pigs by day and slept soundly by night without a thought of evil. But on the fourth night we were doomed to be reminded by Mr. Ghost that we could not lightly tamper with his domestic arrangements.

I had (after the first night) publicly proclaimed through the medium of Tommy, that I intended to sleep with my rifle loaded by my side, and to shoot at anybody who came disturbing our repose. Tommy warmly applauded my design, but was not for indiscriminate shooting. "Mashter shoot man in de leg," said my diminutive henchman, clasping his calf in both hands, "mashter not shoot man up top," patting his head and his shoulder.

I promised to carry out Tommy's instructions faithfully, though I don't think a man with an express bullet in his leg is much better off than with one in his heart. I kept my rifle ready the second night, but after that I forgot all about the ghosts, and never thought we should be bothered again; so the rifle remained outside in its case.

This fourth night happened to be oppressively hot; it must have been quite 80 degrees. There were two windows in our bedroom opening on to the shut-in balconies, one on either side, capable of causing a through draught, and I suggested that we should open them. N. demurred; she had not quite forgotten the banging door, and she argued that they would afford means of ingress to men

in masks, armed with revolvers and so on. I showed her conclusively that no human being could get into our room that way, as the window merely opened on to a fenced-in balcony, over which no man could climb; and she was quite reassured. So I opened the windows and found it all I could do to manage it, so tight jammed was the wood. As they flew open at last a great shower of dust issued forth, and N. remarked that they could not have been opened for years.

I did not pay much attention to this remark at the time; but I believe it is a recognised fact that the opening up of any long-disused room, passage or door is very frequently the occasion for a ghost who has long kept silence to appear. The open windows were a vast improvement, and I slept like a top. At about two in the morning I was awakened by N. pulling my arm and saying in a loud frightened whisper: "There's a man in the room!" I'm afraid I made some stupid remark like: "Where?" or "How do you know?" for it was inky dark and I could see nothing. However, I listened intently and could hear footsteps gradually getting fainter and fainter as they receded; but from what direction they proceeded, or whither they went I was quite unable to determine. N. was very frightened indeed, and I thought it best to carry the whole affair off with a high hand. I told N. it was all her imagination; that she had supped not wisely but too well; that it was absolutely impossible for any man to get into the room. But I saw at once that she was convinced that there had been a man in the room, and I believed her, though I didn't tell her so.

Her story was this. She woke up suddenly with the consciousness that someone was standing by her bed looking down on her. At first she was not a bit alarmed, thinking it was Tommy who had come to call us. But she was annoyed at his unusual method of so doing, and

said sharply: "Who's there? What do you want?" There was no answer, but still the sickening consciousness of an alien presence near. Then she was terribly frightened and shook me with all her might till I awoke, and while she did so the unseen visitor moved slowly down the side of her bed and passed away—whether into my bathroom, or her bathroom, through the wall or through the bolted door, we none of us know to this day. I held my poor frightened wife's hand till she fell asleep, feeling rather creepy myself. N. has never before woken up under the impression that there has been a person in the room without having good cause for so doing. But she is particularly sensitive in sleep to the intrusion of a stranger, as I have noticed when nurses have come silently into her room, and she seems always able to discriminate between familiar and unfamiliar noises. Unlike her I am callous to the intrusion of persons and sounds alike. I have no fifth sense in sleep to warn me of approaching danger, and ten thousand robbers, ghosts or archangels might dance all night round my bed without my so much as suspecting it. Not so N.; she would discover them before they had finished their preliminary bows.

Now follows the part of my story which I consider conclusively proves (so far as such things can be proved) that supernatural agencies were at work to molest us.

The morning after our scare Tommy came up as usual, looking, I thought, a trifle green beneath his ebony skin. I asked him if he had come to our room in the middle of the night, and he looked much surprised and said he hadn't. But before I could narrate the episodes of the night, he broke out into a storm of words. "Mashter! this very bad house, plenty devils here, I ask mashter go away, no shtop," and so on in his almost unintelligible language, pouring forth a story to the following effect.

It appears that he and all the other servants slept on a raised stone platform in the middle of the courtyard,

about fifteen yards from the dining room and downstairs sitting room. About two o'clock in the morning they were all awakened by a loud crying noise coming from the direction of the downstairs sitting room—a noise which Tommy said was like the crooning of a pigeon, only very much louder. This noise went on at intervals for about five minutes, and at the end of that time the servants thought it expedient to go and see what was causing it. Accordingly they went in a body—some eight or ten of them—and explored the downstairs rooms thoroughly, but could find nothing. The doors were all properly barred, and if there had been a man there they must have discovered him. As they reached the rooms the noise ceased and was not repeated during the night.

Such was Tommy's story, witnessed by seven or eight other men. I asked Tommy if the place had a bad reputation; whether there had been a murder there, or what explanation was given to account for the ghostly manifestations.

All I could gather from him was that there were "plenty devils" in the house. The ghosts of two men who were supposed to have died near the place in an abject state of sin; as Tommy, who is a Romanist, put it: "Without no sacryment, no confeshun, no anything!"

Such is our ghost story. I am inclined to believe that all those episodes—the door-banging, the unseen visitor, and the occult groans and shrieks, all proceeded from the same agency, and that that agency was supernatural.

The two latter phenomena possess all the characteristics of ghostly manifestations. The unseen visitor, if he had been a man in the flesh intent on robbery, could easily have snatched up N.'s watch, hand-bag, ornaments and nicknacks before I could find and get at him, and disappeared into a bathroom. But to get out of that bathroom would have puzzled him; he must have drawn

the bolts and made a tremendous noise which we could not fail to hear.

But why argue the remoter question of how a man could get away? What I want to know is, how did a man get into the room? All the doors were bolted, and the only conceivable way would be a ladder from outside high enough to reach the top of our verandah parapet, which was at least ten feet above the verandah, and probably fifty feet from the ground. I dismiss this hypothesis as ridiculous, for there were eight watchmen round the house; and so daring an attempt on the guests of the chief man in the State, in sight of his very windows, would hardly have been made in so well-ordered a place as Jodhpur. Besides which, such an attempt must have been detected had it been made. As regards the reality of the visitation, I can swear to hearing footsteps gradually receding in some unascertainable direction, and N. is absolutely convinced that there was a man, or the semblance of a man, in the room that night.

Then the almost contemporaneous occurrence of weird unaccountable sounds in the rooms below ours, loud enough to attract men sleeping fifteen yards out in the open, yet not loud enough to awaken us above, points to the conclusion that both the footsteps and the voice were those of the same occult person or persons manifesting themselves in different ways.

I am disposed to think that the white-turbaned bangers at the door were the same ghosts as those who disturbed the whole household four nights afterwards. The loud crooning of a pigeon, exaggerated and distorted, would apparently resemble the groan or cry of a human being in pain or distress; we have the popular legend of two men who died unannealed; and nothing seems easier than to connect and elucidate the three episodes on the hypothesis that they were the manifestations of the disembodied spirits of two wicked men.

I am afraid, my dear G., that in asking you to accept this conclusion I am hugging myself in a vain hope. Your mind is of the practical turn ; and I dare say you will send me some acute suggestion that will clear up the whole matter in the light of commonplace reason, and make me wonder why I never thought of so simple an explanation of the mystery. At present I am an agnostic with regard to ghosts ; I have never disbelieved in their existence, but, never having consciously seen one, I prefer to maintain a neutral attitude concerning them. If, however, you cannot reconcile the foregoing with purely natural phenomena, I think I shall have to modify my opinions, and believe that I have now had dealings with people of the unseen world.

Good-bye, and if you feel frightened at bed time after reading this, you cannot do better than carry out the faithful Tommy's advice to us the morning after our scare : " I tink mashter, put one Bible, one prayer book, under piller night time ; then all devils run away."

Louie's Hotel, Simla. March 25, 1898.

My dear W.,

I must write and give you another account of a day's pig-sticking at Jodhpur, for my pen itches to chronicle every detail connected with that noble sport, lest it should fade away and be forgotten and no one the wiser. The " *cacoethes scribendi* " is upon me, and write I must.

To those who know what pig-sticking is, " *O coenae noctesque deum !* " means nothing but " O those damned *chota haziris* in the grey dawn ! " There is nothing so exhilarating as the anticipation of sport unless it be the sport itself ; and I always think that what most people would consider discomfort lends to sport its own particular charm. I like to hustle on my clothes in the dark, and snatch a cup of coffee by a tardy lamp, while

the whole world is asleep and no one, save the hunter and myself, knows that a march is stolen on the game.

There is a peculiarly stealthy, cunning, selfish delight in this which I suppose is part and parcel of our animal nature, and doubtless the tiger feels it as he wanders out alone into the jungle beneath the chilly stars.

On Wednesday, 16th March, 1898, Tommy called us at a quarter to four—Tommy, who had been sleeping outside our door, with a *chaukidar* for company and protection, for it was the night after our ghostly visitation, and we were all in a high state of nerves. At home you would think it funny if you got up and found a dirty savage huddled in a filthy blanket lying full length on the drawing room floor; but in India one gets accustomed to everything, and I was not in the least surprised to find a sleeping watchman blocking up the exit from our only sitting-room.

At half past four we devoured hard-boiled eggs and coffee, and at a quarter to five Hari Singh and the young prince (whose name I discovered to be Shere Singh) drove up to take us away. It was so warm that I didn't trouble to put on a greatcoat. We drove a bit out of our way to pick up L., the engineer, and then on we went; all of us looking rather yellow; some yawning, some smoking, and nobody doing much in the talking line. On we went over the dusty roads between the ever-present avenues of shady trees for four miles or so, till we came to nearly the same place we stopped at before; but this time there was no breakdown. The rocky ridge of hill lay behind us, and in front the bush-dotted expanse of plain. N. rode the same chestnut that she had before, and I had my old steed *Tirah*, so called because he had carried Sir Pratab Singh all through the Tirah campaign. That accounted for his condition; he was poor compared to the other Arabs, but as hard as nails.

The camel vedettes were scattered about in the offing

as the sun came up in a flush of golden red. The syces stood by holding sheaves of spears, and I chose my white bamboo—a light, flexible spear, very handy, but perhaps not quite heavy enough for use against a pig at bay. However, I knew Master *Tirah* well enough to know that there would not be much chance of getting close to a pig who meant taking the offensive, so I chose my spear accordingly.

We mounted and rode out into the plain, and it wasn't long before a camel-scout warned us by a shout that a sounder was approaching. Hari Singh is a wonderful man at a start, and he was going away like an arrow before I knew in what direction to ride. Soon I got pretty close to him; and then down came the family party, a small lot with no very distinctively big boar amongst them. Hari Singh singled one out in a flash; so quickly did he detach him from the main lot that I didn't notice one had left the sounder, and started off after the main body. "There's your pig; there's your pig!" roared Hari after me, and as I turned to the shout I saw Hari and L. going like blazes after a very fair-sized animal. The ground was rough and hillocky; there were lots of bushes and trees about and the pig was a fast traveller. This gave me a chance; my gallant *Tirah* simply flew along, dodging after the pig like a polo-pony after the ball, and leaving me nothing to do but to stick on and keep my head and spear out of mischief. At last I overhauled the others, passed them, and got on terms with master pig.

The going was bad; up one second and down another, and I suppose that accounted for my egregious blunder at this juncture. Anyhow, I whirled my spear over my head, drew it back as far as I could and rammed it at the pig. Alas and alack! The spear went clean over his back; piggy jinked to one side, and my chance was gone. It was Hari Singh's turn then; he galloped down on him from a flank and struck him low down in the belly. The

pig stopped, made a dart at Hari's horse, but missed him. Then a long encounter took place between Hari and L. on one side and the pig on the other. The latter was as game as they make 'em, and died exceeding hard.

First Hari would gallop up and deliver a thrust, and then L. from the other side. Each time the horse came near the pig rushed champing at his legs; but the sharp spear warned him off. This went on for several minutes, while the poor beast's entrails drooped lower and lower from his first gaping wound; and so weak was he from loss of blood that at last he propped himself against a friendly tree, and stood there, with bloodshot eyes and jaws dripping bloody froth, the picture of unconquered and unconquerable pluck.

All this time my friend *Tirah* was behaving very badly. I had forearmed myself with a pair of sharp spurs, but they availed not against the horse's disinclination to face a savage pig at bay. Spur him as I might, he wouldn't go out of a walk when he got within ten yards of his foe, and to approach a lively pig under such circumstances is exceedingly risky. If the pig charges you have no impetus to send your spear home, and the horse is not on his galloping legs and able to avoid the onset by a sudden turn. Hari shouted to me to take the horse out of harm's way, and I felt it was the right thing to do. Even when the pig lay a corpse in the sand, his dorsal bristles flattening down in death, my sagacious steed refused to go anywhere near him. It was a useless task to try to force him, and I gave it up.

But I inwardly registered a vow that if the fates granted me another chance at a pig I would slay that pig before he should turn to bay and frighten my horse into uselessness. The fates were kind.

It was not long before *Khabba* (news) was heard of another lot of pig; but all I saw was Hari galloping as hard as he could go off to the right. The ground was very

open here, looking much like a fallow field; I suppose some crop or other had been grown on it some time before, and the stubble had rotted or been eaten off; anyhow, it was first-rate going. Hari had a good eighty yards' lead of me, but I could let out *Tirah* without fear of encountering trees or quarries or any other dispiriting obstacle, and the result was that I overhauled Hari in the next three hundred yards, both of us going as hard as we knew. Here the country got a bit hillocky, but I wanted first spear, and so made a dash for it as soon as I could and landed the pig a nasty one in the near hind leg, which made him grunt very angrily. But I couldn't get near enough to him that time to give the finishing stroke I coveted; and again I thought I should be out of it when piggy turned on his pursuers.

However, luck was with me. After the prod through his leg the pig thought he would change the venue, and very foolishly headed back towards the grand galloping ground we had just passed over, turning round so sharply that neither Hari nor L. managed to get a spear at him. I got *Tirah* round quicker than they could turn their horses, and was off after the pig at a thousand miles an hour. *Tirah* was a magnificent beast to ride; his stride long and sweeping, giving you what dealers call a "feel"—the feeling of unbounded power and strength; his mouth like satin and his narrow Arab body giving that sense of comfort and security of seat which only an Arab can give. I had it all my own way that time; none of the others could hold a candle to *Tirah* on the flat; and as I raced up to the pig I felt that if ever I was to have the supreme satisfaction of making a good spear the time had come, and come, probably, never to return.

Now I got more alongside my pig than I had ever done before; I was not hurried and I believe that to this fact is due the success which attended me. If you are intent on getting first spear merely a poking prod the moment

you get within striking range may be all that is needed, but to give a really killing blow you must be right on top of the animal. At least so I found, and I dare say others have found it so before me. I was right over the pig when I let drive at him, and the spear went in close to the spine on the near side, and passed clean through him. He went on alongside of me for a few yards and then fell down in a sitting posture. I tried to keep hold of the spear to draw it out, but it was too firmly fixed, and I had to let it go. When I turned *Tirah* round the pig was dead. He had never stirred from the spot where he fell, and he sank down and died before Hari could have aim at him.

In this last chase the real excitement came in just at the moment of spearing. I was so close to the pig that if he had rushed in at my horse's legs he must have cut them from under him. As the spear entered his back his gleaming tushes were only in front of my foot, and as he slackened after receiving his death wound his head gradually approached my foot, passed beneath it, and fell to the rear. I expected every second to hear a sudden rip and feel the warm blood puddling in my sock. It was a curious sensation, and I suppose the equivalent in the experience of a novice in pig-sticking to Tommy Atkins' feeling when he heard for the first time the bullets singing round his head.

Hari now said that we had disposed of all the available pig, and that we must accordingly go home. So we gave up our spears to the syces and rode back over the plain towards the distant towering fort.

It was one of those rare supreme moments which shine out like diamonds in the sombre setting of life. The sun had risen, but the rose-flecked clouds still hung about the east; the air blew cool on brows hot from the chase; little bands of that most graceful of deer—the *chikara*—leaped from rock to rock up the hill-side on our left; in

short, it was the perfection of a summer morning, and I had just killed a good pig single-handed. How amply such moments atone for the longer, darker hours of worry, toil or pain; and who can know them in their fullest joy but the lover of nature and sport?

There are some who know what it is to bring a long work to a successful close; others who know the mental peace of triumphant resistance to temptation in its many forms; others who have combated the resistance of the world and won. But though these have a deeper and a more lasting sense of joy, their blood is never stirred as the soldier's is stirred as he gains the crest of the blood-stained hill, or as the sportsman is stirred as he dwells on each episode in a successful hunt.

Our preponderating animal nature is on the side of the two last, but the lone sportsman has a joy which does not enter into the emotions of the rest; for to him alone Nature speaks as a friend in all her changing moods, and he alone associates with his triumphs the sympathy of her eternal face.

So merrily we four went chatting on our way homewards, with the *chikara* eyeing us inquisitively from the sanctuary of their rocks, and the rose-red pile of the distant fort beckoning us on. Then happened one of those things which even Tantalus would have resented. Two or three pig came galloping down on our right towards the ridge; it was too far off to see whether they were boars or sows; all we knew was that they were pig and that we had no spears! There was not a moment to be lost; if the pig were not speedily headed off they would gain the ridge and safety, and laugh at us from the edge of a precipice or the mouth of a cavern.

So while L. galloped off to get some spears from the syces on the road far to the left, I gave *Tirah* a dig in the ribs and made for a point which I thought would cut the pigs off. The grass was long here, and I lost sight of the

game altogether, but kept on and on with the idea that if they were travelling in their original direction I should be all right, whereas if they had turned left-handed to the hills they would run into Hari and L. as he came back with the spears.

I went on and on a long way, going at such a pace that *Tirah* nearly trod on the heels of some *chikara* who were too much astonished at the apparition to move out of the way; and at last I stopped near a disused house and looked about. I could see no trace of the pig, and Hari, who came up after me, said they must have gone right back towards the open. However, N. was the only person who really knew what had happened.

She was riding behind Hari (who was some way behind me), and before they had gone very far she saw the pig bear down to their left and cross towards the road and the hills. She called out to Hari, but he either didn't hear or wouldn't take any notice and galloped on. However, she stopped herself and went after the pig, and having met L. pointed out their direction to him. It was at this juncture that Hari and I, having lost our pig, returned disconsolately to rejoin the others, and we were very much obliged to Mistress N. for having used her eyes so well.

L. had brought two spears; he gave me one and we set off after the pig—of which there were now only two, though when we first sighted them I made certain there were three. L. and I had a capital gallop after them; they made straight for the rocks, and we had to do our best to keep them out of them. We came up to them just as they crossed a small aqueduct, where the going was steep and bad, and to our disgust discovered they were both sows.

So we left them in peace, or rather with what I suspect must have been a shocking bad attack of indigestion; for we had bustled them along at a great pace the moment

they had finished the stupendous meal which is to piggy-wiggy dinner and tiffin and breakfast all rolled into one.

A pig is to a Mussulman the most unclean of all beasts, and yet, curiously enough, the disciple of the prophet imitates his methods during his fasting month of Ramadan as closely as possible. One would almost think one or other of the two had copied the other. The pig eats all night, and so does the Mussulman. The Mussulman sleeps all day and so does the pig. Clearly the Mahommedan copied the pig; for whereas it is the pig's standing rule to eat at night, the Mahommedan only makes a practice of so doing during one month in the year.

L. and I returned disconsolate to join the others, thinking that anyhow we should have no more fun that day. But N., for the second time, was the quickest-sighted of the party, and we hadn't gone homewards more than a quarter of a mile before she viewed and hulloa'd away a nice little boar, in all probability the same one that had been with the two sows when we first saw them. Then followed a short but very exciting race. The pig made for the hill, and he had about half a mile to go before he got there. He took us over the most abandoned ground, up a nullah, then crossing it backwards and forwards, through a lot of thick bushes, over some nasty sharp stones and finally across the aqueduct, which was fortunately bridged over with loose flags in one or two places near. Hari and I had a great race for first spear. He had the best of it nearly all the way, but at last I got almost up to the pig, and was just going to prod him when he jinked off to Hari's side. Finally, the latter got him soon after crossing the aqueduct.

There is no sensation in the world like that of riding over bad ground after a pig. Fox-hunting at home has its very real sensations—when, for instance, you get nearer and nearer to a fence that looms bigger and uglier at every stride. But between the fences the ground is all

right and your mind is concentrated on the next fence, and where to take it. In pig-sticking it is very different; concentration of mind on any one object except the pig is impossible, for every second brings its new problem, requiring instant decision. You are no sooner out of a hole safely than you are down the bank of a nullah; you are no sooner out of the nullah than you are making straight for a tree. Practically, you leave everything to your horse, whereas in fox-hunting you can never do that.

Fox-hunting, one's heart is sometimes in one's boots; pig-sticking, it is never out of one's mouth. The whirl-like succession of sensations; the necessity for instantaneous decision; the confidence between man and horse which leaves to the latter the responsibility of deciding what the rider cannot pretend to decide; the fierce, undulating rush; the culminating intoxication of the final thrust—all these combine to make pig-sticking, for men of eager temperament, the finest sport in the world.

Louie's Hotel, Simla. March 28, 1898.

My dear W.,

This time I am writing to attempt to put before you a very remarkable Indian development, namely Patiala. No one who has not been to Patiala has seen every phase of Indian life; for here we have the typical instance of the influence of the English *raj* on native character and institutions; and the effect of the grafting of English habits on the stock of Indian custom is no less amusing than interesting.

To start with, Patiala is the head of the great Sikh Confederation; he is, so to say, the hierarch of a body of co-religionists whose bravery and resolution have made them the foremost power in India. You will remember the gallantry of these men in the recent Tirah campaign, and how the story of their deaths at Saragheri has

echoed all over the English-speaking world. Of these men Patiala is the hereditary prophet, priest and king—a kind of Indian Melchisedec, wielding the twin sceptre of a united spiritual and temporal authority.

No grander position than this can be conceived; and in the abstract Patiala ought to be—and, indeed, if we English had not come to India might have been—a severely dignified and awful personage, hedged about with Oriental majesty, terrible even to the princes of his sect and unapproachable save by a chosen few.

As a matter of fact, Patiala is a weedy-looking little man who has outraged every canon of his religion by marrying an English wife; who in public tosses off tumblers of neat brandy as though it were water; who walks about in breeches and polo boots; who shakes hands with jockeys and touts; and who generally has preferred to put away the insignia of his unique position in order to put on the habits and customs of the third-rate English racing man. Fortunately he has not adopted the latter's manners, for, though the society which surrounds him is of the most dubious complexion, Patiala in manner and hospitality is still the high-bred Indian prince, and everybody who visits Patiala, high or low, rich or poor, is sure of a welcome and the best of everything.

But it is pitiful to see how an indiscriminating Anglomania can degrade an Indian prince, not only in the opinion of his own race (for Patiala's marriage and general habits are a source of sorrow to his stricter co-religionists), but also in the eyes of all decent Europeans.

Patiala is the rendezvous for every rascally ne'er-do-well in India. The Maharaja is the milch-cow every broken-down jockey helps to dry (for a knowledge of horses is a never-failing passport), and every man who has an insatiable craving for strong drink and who prefers getting it for nothing to paying for it goes to Patiala and lives at the Rajendra Club, a handsome building built

by the Maharaja about eight years ago for the entertaining of his English guests, where a man may call for fifty whiskies and sodas a day and never be an anna the poorer.

I was credibly informed that the contractor who undertakes to cater for Europeans when there is a big *tamasha* * on, as there was when we arrived at Patiala, charges the Maharaja at the minimum rate of three bottles of wine per head per diem, and spirits extra.

This fact indicates both the probable popularity of Patiala and the general character of those who frequent the Rajendra Club.

Patiala is the largest race-horse owner in India, and I suppose there is not a race of the value of a thousand rupees and over for which a horse of his does not run. In Calcutta I know that a horse of his started in every race, and two in more than one. The racing season begins at Patiala in November and finishes there in March, and on both these occasions the Maharaja has a great week, and asks a couple of hundred racing men and their wives to stay with him. We had been asked by Mr. W., the Maharaja's private secretary, a deservedly popular little man, once a naval officer, and now one of the hardest-worked people in all India—to come to Patiala whenever we liked, and unfortunately we chose the end of the week which at Patiala closes the Indian racing year.

We knew nothing of this, or certainly we should never have offered ourselves then, for the entertainment of our humble selves was an anticlimax which proved too much for the energies of officials jaded with the incessant labours of amusing two hundred people for seven days and nights.

I learned that the week had been mapped out in a way that only left about three hours' sleep for those who determined to see it through. The day began with pig-sticking, necessitating getting up about 4 a.m., went on to polo, continued with racing and ended with dancing,

* *Tamasha* = "show."

cards and gambling. Then in the intervals there were cricket, racquets, tennis and croquet. We came in for none of these festivities, but we saw most of the people who had taken part in them, and a very mixed crowd it was. As we drove up to the club a gentleman was standing over a decapitated pig, abusing a lot of coolies in strident tones that had a distinctly cockney flavour about them. The disembowelled pig was leaning up against the side of the path, in full view of everyone driving up to the club —a not particularly pleasing sight. I wondered why the butcher was allowed to ply his horrid trade in such a place, until I made out that the excited individual was the person who had stuck the pig that morning, and who was cursing the coolies for having cut the pig's head off close under the ears, thus spoiling it for setting up. Why he chose that very public spot for his butcher's work and lecture was, I suppose, to let as many people as possible know that he had actually succeeded in getting a " first spear."

This type of individual is exceedingly common within the purlieus of the Rajendra Club.

The club is built on the model of an English one and is very comfortable. The hall is a large room where there are plenty of newspapers and easy chairs. There are three dining rooms, a card room, a drawing room and a bar. Smoking and ladies seem to be allowed all over the premises.

There was always a knot of idle native gentlemen hanging about the rooms: some talking, some gambling in the card room, and a large majority drinking at the bar. Wizened little men in riding costume or tight-fitting trousers made themselves at home everywhere. There was very often, especially at night, a great bear-fight in the neighbourhood of the bar—where the *ne plus ultra* of wit seemed to consist in chucking a glass of liquid over a man's head and departing hurriedly to avoid reprisals.

Sahib, the Maharaja's brother, a huge lion-like bearded monster of a man with a pleasant face and a sonorous voice and laugh, seemed to be the presiding genius at these bacchanalian revels; but I don't suppose he was often selected as a sponge for the contents of tumblers. He was only twenty-four, but he looked like thirty-five; and he could have picked up any two men in the place and carried them about on one arm.

The *bandabast** incidental to the Maharaja's hospitality must have been enormous. There were about a hundred and fifty large tents under the trees in the pleasant garden which surrounds the Maharaja's palace, so that it looked as if a regiment had taken up its quarters there.

Each tent had its own carriage, which waited about all day to fulfil the bidding of the occupier of the tent; and each carriage had about half a dozen men attendant on it. The place swarmed with bearers, cooks, syces, horses, and carriages; and a constant stream of humanity passed to and from the club. The tents, even ours, beneath a shady mango, were insufferably hot during the day time.

* *Bandabast* = "arrangements."

CANADA IN '95

These trifling reminiscences have been written for and are affectionately dedicated to " Cousin Possum," Vera and Bobbie.

APOLOGY

WRITING an account of travel is as though a man who had gathered some rare flower upon a far distant hill should sit down long afterwards by his fireside, and with knitted brow and labouring brush strive in vain to reproduce the colours that his materials cannot give, and the shades that his memory has obscured.

The great glories of travel—the changing face of Nature; the almost imperceptible and elusive shades of psychological characterisation; the multitudinous patchwork of the nations—these things are too fine and bright to be capable of reproduction at the hands of the common journeyman.

All that such a one can hope to give is a sketch in monochrome; an impression of the great world-scene lit up dimly for the short space of the noontide of a winter's day; conscious that even thus to those who have long loved to watch the sun rise and the shadows lengthen over their adopted homelands, his drawing must seem exaggerated, his perspective faulty, and his colours crude.

To all such honourable persons an apology is owed and offered; they are the salt of the remote earth, but they are few and far between; and some, too, there be who wish that he who runs may write, that they who sit at home may read.

CANADA IN '95

August 22. 1895.

EFT home at 11.22 a.m. at three days' notice. Bought nothing, though I expected to be away at least nine months; a portmanteau and a canvas bag constituted my sole luggage. Mother drove with me the seven familiar odd miles to the station; the black ponies in the phaeton. We spoke hardly a word the whole way, except when Judy shied at a flaring poster stuck on one of the red smooth-faced rocks on Callow Pitch, which started a rather less lame discussion of the probable future of the science of advertising.

The dear old mater was in the dumps, and so was I. It is rather an appalling thing to have to part from the person you love best in the world for at least nine months, with the betting about level that you won't see her again at all. And to have to say goodbye, leaning out of a railway carriage, with a sympathetic porter expecting his tip in the offing, does not detract from the awkwardness of the situation. Outwardly it is comic, but inwardly tragic. Poor, dear mother broke down to my certain knowledge, and it was only the divorcing progress of the train which prevented her seeing me do likewise.

Well, the train divided at Shrewsbury, and, of course, the porter had put my luggage in the wrong van. Just because I was going to America this happened; if one could buy an outfit on board a ship I dare say it wouldn't have. I saw my luggage steam out of the station, bound

for Bridge of Allan, or some other place far beyond all hope of redemption; and I registered a mighty oath that baggage or no baggage, I would sail that afternoon aboard the *Vancouver*. At the same time I wrote half a dozen telegrams, to every conceivable place where the train could by any chance get to, begging the station masters to send my things post-haste to the quay at Liverpool. But my own private opinion is that these remedial measures derived their efficacy (for the baggage did turn up at last) solely and entirely from the great oath I had sworn to start that day with my baggage or without it.

It is a cussed world; or, in other words, cosmic chances love the man of philosophic temperament, who cares not at all whether they work for him or no.

When I got to Liverpool I ran up and down the quay hunting for my lost property; I dashed to the railway siding; I interviewed porters—nay, even the station master himself; but it was no good, my things were not to be found.

So I hastened off to the good ship *Vancouver*, which had been due to start oceanwards for the last ten minutes, wondering what a fortnight in the same clothes would feel like.

Whether my friends the cosmic chances applauded my *sang-froid* or not I cannot determine; anyway, they had deposited my baggage alongside the gangway I began mournfully to climb as the ship's whistle blew a hideous warning note. I saw it when I'd gone about three paces. There is a *facilis descensus* which is not peculiar to Avernus; I was speedily embracing my dear old bag, and shedding glad tears over my aged portmanteau. To the porter who counselled me to get on board as quick as I could I presented ten shillings.

Just then Uncle Reggie, whom I had never expected to see, pushed through the crowd, and I got two or three minutes' talk with him before being hustled on board.

It was very kind of him to think of coming down to the docks on purpose to see me off; such actions at such times touch the heart and live long in the memory.

A large ship is a most bewildering place to those who know nothing of its arrangement. You think you are going to your cabin, and you find yourself in the engine-room; and when you want your lunch the saloon is nowhere to be found, though on five previous occasions you had landed yourself there by mistake. And when, on sailing, the decks are crammed with a jostling, heaving mass of humanity, seething up companion ladders and surging down hatchways, with the second class passengers routing the captain from the bridge, and the steerage passengers monopolising the promenade deck, the confusion to the uninitiated seems terrible. When I was in the steerage I thought I was a first class passenger; when I was in the saloon I misdoubted my identity; and when I got on deck I began to think that ship discipline was a fiction invented by the Lords of the Admiralty and perpetuated by a credulous and vainglorious people.

Such a waving of handkerchiefs and kissing of hands as the great ship slowly swung about! It was a truly moving sight. I felt that many parting then would never meet again; and some, no doubt, there were who would meet again and wish that they had never met. One small accident occurred just before we left the quay. The baggage was being hoisted on board by a crane, and it was two men's business to watch the swinging portmanteau, unhitch it when over the hatchway, and slide it into the hold. Whether they weren't looking out or what exactly happened I didn't see; anyway, a poor old man (a passenger himself, I think) got struck an awful bang by a Saratoga trunk just on the region a schoolboy selects for a kick and a schoolmaster selects for a birching. Naturally he didn't see it coming and went down like a rabbit;

and when he was pulled up I saw the blood streaming from a deep gash on the side of his head.

In his innocence and generosity father had obtained for me the doctor's cabin, a privilege for which he paid eight extra guineas. Oh, how I longed, even that very first evening, to be out of it and its odours! What a very Æneas for wiliness was the doctor! He got rid of a noisome stench and a horrible noise and lived and slept in peace and comfort, and found people willing to pay him eight guineas for ten days' enjoyment of those inestimable advantages. I think that smell of butcher's shop and sink combined was the most valuable smell I ever heard of. Of course a guinea or two was paid for the noise, for that (the hauling up and emptying into the sea of the engine ashes) only occurred every four hours during the night; but the stink I had always with me. The ship was cram-full, and money could not buy another cabin, so I had just to grin and bear it all. But seriously, I could never pass the kitchen door without holding my nose, and you are aware that I have no squeamish stomach. Directly I wanted to leave my cabin I used to hold my nose with one hand, while I opened the door with the other; and the habit grew so upon me that even now I frequently find myself going downstairs to breakfast with my nose fast clasped in my left hand. Such is the force of habit and of ship smells.

You may imagine that my cabin had its redeeming points. Such was in fact not the case. Of course, I had it to myself, bar the smell, but then I rather like company, especially when I feel a little homesick. I don't know that I am strictly accurate in saying that I had it to myself. Corporeally and physically, of course, I did, but the walls of my abode were simply plastered with the photographs of second-rate young women in low dresses, of all types and complexions. The doctor was evidently a great lady-killer, and on this particular voyage he gave

us a fine exhibition of his methods; for he was to be seen at all hours walking the deck, talking and flirting with one of the most abandoned vulgarians in female guise that it has ever been my misfortune to see. He himself was a small dark man with a very pretty moustache, and that indescribable something which betokens the cad.

I had the good fortune, however, on this my first day on board to make the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. J—— W——, a Welsh gentleman and his wife going out to take up a property in the neighbourhood of Moosomi, in Canada, and with them I spent many pleasant hours.

With a few exceptions the first class passengers were not a first class lot, the greater part being women and children on their way out to join farmers in the Dominion.

August 23.

Was awakened by a furious noise at 6 a.m., and, on looking out of the porthole, I see land and perceive that the ship is motionless. This, then, is Ireland, Moville to wit, where we are to lie till the mails come on board. A pretty, green, indented coastline is this Donegal side of Lough Foyle. After breakfast I went on shore in a small boat, and prepared to do what was customary on such occasions. I had not long to wait in order to know what was expected of me; in company with four others I was thrust on to a jaunting car and carried off to visit Green Castle. This was a nice old ruin at the portals of which bare-legged ragged children sold shamrocks and begged for pennies. On the way thither another car passed us, whereon the doctor was seated, with his arm round his lady friend's waist. This kind of thing rather marred the general effect produced by my first visit to Ireland, and I was glad to get away behind the shocking screw that had dragged us up the hill. As we went the rain come down in torrents, but I

couldn't resist stopping to pick some perfect honeysuckle that grew magnificently by the roadside. In McConnell's hotel I wrote to Charlie and Mother. At 3.15 the *Vancouver* left the harbour, saluting the *City of Rome* as she went on her way. At 5, the sea began to get much rougher, and I became correspondingly ill.

Dinner was at the godless hour of 5.30, and at such a time, pretended I, who could be expected to eat? That was not the real reason, however, as people unfortunately discovered when I left prematurely. I went to bed and slept right through a badish gale, which a good many said was as stiff as is often experienced at that time of year.

August 24.

After a bath at 6 a.m. I went to bed again. Could eat nothing at breakfast, and lay all morning on deck in a chair. Recovered by lunch; fit as ever; eat hugely and read Boswell all afternoon. About this period I began to discover that the *Vancouver* was inconveniently crowded. This became apparent in a number of ways. To begin with, there were two " goes " of meals, because everybody couldn't get into the saloon at one and the same time. The saloon steward took everybody's name the first evening, and asked him or her if they wanted to breakfast at 8 or 8.30; to lunch at 12.30 or 1; and dine at 5.30 or 6? I told the steward I would give the matter my best consideration, and finally I decided that if a choice had to be made between early hours and dirty plates, the former constituted the lesser evil.

But a few mornings of breakfast at eight convinced me of the immaturity of my counsels. The mornings were long enough, in all conscience, without getting up at seven, and if one didn't get up at seven one didn't get any breakfast; that is to say, if one arrived at one minute

past half-past eight, the table was in full possession of a ravenous throng of "second-goers" who would rather see you blowed than give you any of their victuals. But, once made, the decision was irrevocable, and I had to struggle up at seven in order to get a bath and be ready by eight o'clock.

The deck was the silent witness of the other effect of overcrowding. From stern to bow the ship was a panorama, a long, undulating vista of women and children; sitting, walking, shrieking, weeping, lying prostrate, groaning, talking; as befitted their mood or the occasion.

The smoking-room was ever of an atmosphere denser than a London fog, through which came hurtling American twangs calling for drinks and cigars. The saloon was full of pianists waiting their turn; and neither the music nor the stale smell of food was very invigorating. Altogether, I have often spent a more delightful ten days than I did aboard that Dominion liner.

August 25.

Quite recovered from yesterday's squeamishness. Read Boswell all morning and slept all afternoon. Have made 1500 miles already. Atlantic swell very perceptible, putting most of the ladies *hors de combat*. This I now regard (being inured to the water) as of the nature of a providential dispensation, for it enabled me to be late for my "go" of breakfast and yet obtain a chair amid the decimated ranks of the second lot.

By this time I had begun to realise my fellow-passengers. They were a motley crew. I have got a list of their names before me as I write, and their forms and faces, tricks and oddities, rise up again in live hideousness. Families of dimensions of that so fittingly yclept troop were of common occurrence. There were the Rev. G. Osborne Troop, Mrs. Osborne Troop and infant, Miss Troop, Miss Ettie Troop, Miss Wilhelmina Troop,

Master Troop, Master Willie Troop, Master Bertie Troop and nurse.

Then there were Mr. Espinosa, Mrs. Espinosa, Miss Espinosa, Miss Espinosa, Miss Espinosa. Those young ladies took particular care not to reveal their Christian names; they weren't going to have every Tom, Dick and Harry thinking of or perhaps even daring to address them as Perdita and Lucia and Maria—not they. The noses of this family bewrayed its origin; they were Spanish Jews, and a more remarkable couple than the parents I have rarely seen. The father was about four feet six high, with a hunch back, a beaky nose, a piercing eye, and a skin that looked as if a match would set light to it. His coat was much too big for him and came almost to his knees; a huge black pendulous French bow-tie dangled over his bosom, and his trousers were modelled on the most extravagant of peg-top cuts. He had a rasping high-pitched voice, and took snuff.

Mrs. Espinosa was a gigantic woman, about six feet two and extremely fat, with an eye that met yours with the most ferocious expression. I always expected to find Mr. Espinosa sitting on her knee, but I never did. She used to roar for food across the table in a tone that set everyone shivering with consternation.

Poor Misses Espinosas, one, two and three! Nobody ever dared even so much as look at you, for fear of mamma's awful presence. And you weren't half bad-looking either, in a dark, Espinosey, southern kind of way.

Then there was Major G. le M. Gretton. Nobody seemed to know what he was major in; I dare say he didn't himself. He was one of a type—and that a very disagreeable one—which is to be found everywhere. He smole and smole, and I dare swear he was a shocking villain. But he was most assiduous in his attention to the ladies, if that is to be considered a point in his favour.

One in particular, whom he armed up and down the deck in all kinds of weathers. He had a bleary face, a wicked eye, and a slight veneer of polish. When he walked he was upright as a post-box, and the major part of him oozed out at every pore. I must say I disliked that man immensely, and the more civil he was the ruder did I become.

One of the most extraordinary objects on the ship was a gentleman rejoicing in the high-flying name of St. Claire. He wore his hair very short, with a long waxed moustache, and a suit of the very biggest and brightest checks I ever saw—on a race-course or off one. He was very kind to me, and once condescended to take me round the engine-room and explain everything all wrong. I often wondered, and still am wondering, what his past had been. I feel convinced he did not begin life as Mr. St. Claire.

I have a pervading suspicion that he felt much relieved when the ship finally left the shores of Ireland. He had two female encumbrances, a Mrs. and a Miss, and the latter was a very fair female counterpart of himself. She had dark brown eyes, and used to sit in a *dégagé* attitude on deck and employ those dangerous weapons to the ensnaring of the male sex. If they didn't respond she would come and stand by them as they surveyed the rolling waste and gaze with melting glance into their faces. Someone said they'd often seen her dancing as a ballet girl at the Alhambra. I think that was probably about her form.

August 26.

Sighted a steamer, probably one of the Donaldson line. A dull, damp day. Jones-Williams (a most excellent little man, just married, going back with his wife to his old haunts in the Far West) said he'd seen a whale—if not two. This was most exciting. Smell of cabin more

intolerable than ever. It smells worse than any place on board, and I can speak with authority, having to-day visited the steerage, personally conducted by Mr. St. Claire, the loud gentleman with waxed moustache and peat-moss suit. There, only a clean smell of disinfectants; but here, the stench of bilge-water, cooking, grease, cabbage, garbage and all uncleanness. Am not by any means impressed with my messmates the *famille* Stillings. They have taken me under their especial care, and the two Misses Stillings, who are very big, fat and greasy looking, say: "May I pass you some potatoes?" and "Do you care to eat a *lillel* beet?"

At such moments I feel like some delicate invalid, whose fastidious appetite has to be pampered and cosseted with extraneous art. But no; if I was really an invalid I fancy the sight of the Misses Stillings would neutralise the effect of all their gastronomic seductiveness. Stillings *père*, the medico, is a fat, happy-looking fellow, who appears to think that his residence in Maine is the hub of the universe. I never attempted to undeceive him.

Mrs. Stillings never suffers, like other ladies, from sea-sickness, but she is but a faint foreshadowing of her daughter. I never saw two women who laid themselves out so thoroughly to gormandise. I have met them at all hours; at quoits, on deck, after Sunday church service, at meals; but on all occasions their conversation was of food, its preparation and consumption.

August 27.

A rough day, as manifested by fiddles on the tables, drenched decks, mackintoshes and ubiquitous nausea—twenty degrees of roll. Life on board on such a day is dull beyond all imagination and loathsome beyond all description.

The only evidence of vitality amongst the passengers is confined to the smoking cabin, where the eternal

gambling on the ship's diurnal progress goes on unabated. This intellectual and enthralling pursuit consists in the issue of thirty or forty tickets each bearing a number corresponding to what may possibly be the extent of the ship's run for the twenty-four hours; if the ship usually does about 300 miles, numbers from 280 to 320 are sold, together with a lot of blanks, and the possessor of the lucky number gets the pool.

But though this is the bare skeleton of the pastime, attractions of massive proportions are superimposed by the usual practice of putting some of the numbers up to auction. Here the gambling begins afresh. The man who draws number 289 either prefers the chance of a fiver or the certainty of, say, a sovereign. In the former case he puts the ticket in his pocket and awaits events; in the latter he announces his intention of selling it. In such cases there was always one old man who, by unanimous acclaim, was thrust into the auctioneer's chair. He was one of those persons who appear to consider that the presence of a beard atones for the absence of a tie; I am not perfectly sure that he wore a collar. But he was a great man for the position, and his urbanity and discretion did wonders for the market.

The rolling of the ship has now reached thirty-one degrees; about as much as a ship can manage without going over altogether. I slept most of the afternoon, but went on deck to see what was going on about five o'clock. Just as I got to the top of the ladder a fearful roll took place; the deck heeled over as steep as the side of a house, and everybody clung to the first fixture that came handy. One unfortunate woman caught hold of the handle of a cabin door (the captain's), and as the deck fell away from beneath her feet the whole weight of her body came on the handle, which gave way with a loud crash, and the poor woman was precipitated head-first down what was little better than what a Canadian calls a "jump-off."

Her head struck the bulwarks heavily, and I for one thought she must be dead. But the doctor rushed up with commendable speed, and shouldering the unconscious girl, carried her down the companion as if he'd begun life as a coal heaver.

I owe the doctor a grudge for letting me his cabin, but I am forced to admit that he was a muscular little man and capable withal. The wounded lady got all right again in a few days, and as she walked about the decks with her face very pale and her head bound up was the object of much interest and commiseration.

Dinner that evening was a splendid orgy. Very few people were well enough to attend, but Miss Stillings, of course, was there, though I rather think her father had succumbed.

The man who sat on my left (I never had anyone on my right, as I sat at the gangway end of my table) stayed long enough to enable me to upset a bowl of mulligatawny and a whisky and soda into his waistcoat; but after that I suppose he felt he'd had all he wanted, for he departed, and by the end of dinner Miss Stillings and I were left alone, not only at our table, but in the whole saloon. However, there we sat, quite happily cracking nuts and talking, while the ship swayed from side to side like a wounded buffalo, when all of a sudden there was a fearsome crash, and the whole contents of a tall sideboard near the door came hurtling down—glasses, oranges, dish-covers, wine bottles, cruet stands, gingerbreads and napkins—all mingled together picturesquely on the floor; and at the same moment six tumblers on our own table, which had been piled up pagoda-like by a foolish steward, leapt and broke and foamed at the feet of the fair Stillingian damsel.

We both thought things were being made too hot, and reluctantly abandoned the nuts, amongst which Miss Stillings had done a lot of good work. But it was no easy

matter to leave the cabin. The ship kept canting over from one awful angle to another with a regularity that only just escaped monotony; and the only thing to be done was to hold tight to something firm when your side went up, and lean against it when your side went down, just like boys catching hold of the plank they're see-sawing on.

But that didn't help one out of the cabin; and one had to bolt for it when there seemed to be less chance than usual of being thrown full length on the long centre table, or stunned against the outside wall.

One of the stewards (he was a very small, weakly little fellow) must have considered one of my rushes singularly ill-chosen. I was thrown violently against him as he held on to a chair, and he was most unmercifully pinched between us. I see his face of anguish to this day.

We are expected to reach Belle Isle to-morrow. Iceberg region yet to be faced.

August 28.

Played quoits with the American girls and Jones-Williams and Vanderbyl—a Nimrod with a beard in the unpleasant stage, and a very nasal accent.

On this occasion he kept continually exclaiming of the opposing side: "They can't play for nuts" and roaring with laughter, as though he had said a very good thing. Personally, I don't believe they were trying to play for nuts; as far as I know the suggestion of a prize of nuts had never been mooted; but at all events it was a gross reflection on the absorptive power of the elder Miss Stillings to insinuate that if there had been a question of nuts she would not have exerted herself to obtain them. I therefore regard the remark as wholly wanting in point and relevancy.

A school of bottle-nosed whales seen this morning—which caused much excitement. About 3 we went

close past an iceberg, about sixty feet high at one end and about ten at the other, with a flat shelving top, round which three much smaller ones danced attendance. I think the big berg was the loveliest thing I have ever seen; stately it sailed upon the face of the waters, with the pale green light coruscating through its icy depths and melting into azure blue about its glittering crags.

Reached Belle Isle about 5 p.m.—a bleak, desolate, rocky coast. One human habitation only to be seen, and that the lighthouse. The steamer *Mexican* was wrecked in the bay here not long ago.

All danger of sickness being now passed, the ship assumes a very animated appearance. People flock out of their cabins like worms after a shower, and every corner is crowded. Am thankful that I have been so well all the time.

August 29.

The birth of a baby in the steerage causes intense enthusiasm; some benevolent ladies get up a subscription, and the modest sum of eight pounds is obtained. But then ours is not a wealthy crew. I pity the poor mother; till this moment I never fully realised the inner meaning of Shakespeare's "cribb'd, cabin'd and confined." It is a proof of the progress of a misdirected humanitarianism that more poor women expecting additions to their family are not shipped off as steerage passengers for a ten days' voyage; for on ship-board they get three things that very few of them ever get at home—sea-air, a subscription list and universal sympathy. The baby was christened Vancouver, after the ship; as an Irish priest remarked: "If I was that baby when I got to years of discretion I'd bring an action for libel against my god-parents!"

This same priest was a splendid fellow, with a handsome face and a rollicking laugh, popular with every-

body. One night in the smoking-room, Mr. St. Claire—the loud gentleman—got into a very maudlin state, and thought insulting the parson would constitute a very good joke.

"I see," said the Irishman, "that you are aware that the rules of my order forbid my knocking you down."

After this Mr. St. Claire (doubtless fearing lest the priest might suddenly forget some of the rules) became frightfully apologetic; and the more whisky he consumed the humbler did he become, till at last, I believe, he was found prone on his stomach on the floor of the cabin, still murmuring inarticulate apologies.

Played a game called "potato-racing" and beat the fat American championess. Arrived at Anticosti—a long, flat, desolate-looking island, covered with trees, but inhabited only by lighthouse men. Concert in the evening, which I did not attend. Twenty pounds obtained for Liverpool seamen's orphans.

August 30.

Wake up to see the coast of Gaspé, bounding the southern shore of the great St. Lawrence. The coast resembles the ordinary type of Scotch scenery. At 11.30 reach Rimouski, where several passengers disembark, including Nimrod Vanderbyl (who is doubtless hunting for nuts) and the loud-clad gentleman and suite. The fat Americaness is most *empressé* in her manner towards me; I'm afraid I haven't conveyed to her obtuse intellect an adequate idea of my extreme dislike.

At lunch to-day her father, the medico, invited me to visit them in New Hampshire; it was fortunately not difficult to refuse. All this comes of eating in company; to one whose mental vision is bounded on the north by veal and ham pies, on the south by legs of mutton, on the west by pickles, and on the east by crumpets, there is, I feel small doubt, something irresistibly sympathy-

begetting in a heavy meal consumed under difficulties in the proximity of one who alone is so tenacious of purpose as oneself.

However, I cannot honestly say that I would sooner have been ill rather than have sounded in Miss Stillings' ample bosom a note that finds no echo in my own.

A " thrasher," a kind of sword-fish, caused a diversion by its gambollings. Saw some white seals, which a retired naval officer tells me are peculiar to this gulf.

Arrive at Quebec at 11.30 p.m.—a most atheistical time to arrive anywhere, and most especially so when one has to get a lot of luggage through the hands of some cranky *douane* officials. But even this can't snuff out my delight at the prospect of getting on land again, and J.-W. and the Stillings and I had a festive supper together, towards the end of which I broached a bottle of port, and invited the party to partake thereof. Mrs. Stillings declared (with great truth) that she wasn't taking any. No more she was, I could see that; and for that very reason did I wish her to take some; so after a great show of affected reluctance the dame consented to share our potations, and did her fair share too. I have noticed that the people who refuse to drink at first usually drink more than anyone else in the end.

At length we got so confidential that nothing but a speech would satisfy the intellectual soul of the doctor; so I toasted the United States, its free citizens and its varied climes, amongst which was not Concord (the home of the Stillings) regnant, unapproachable, supreme? Might it not, indeed, in the language of paradox, be styled Concord the unconquered? (N.B.—In defence of this vile pun I must state that a Yankee pronounces Concord as we pronounce conquered.)

I concluded by remarking that though the ship had a list to starboard it was reassuring to observe that some of the passengers had voluntarily undertaken to preserve

the equilibrium by discovering a decided leaning towards port. This, like most other bad speeches, was much applauded, and after consuming an enormous number of ginger snaps I went on deck and smoked till midnight, at which hour I went on shore, or rather into a shed full of packages, amongst which the customs officials stalked haughtily.

I had to collect and carry off all my impedimenta myself, which was no light work, and if I had known of it beforehand I would not have eaten so many gingerbreads.

Then, after everything had been examined, there was no cab to take it off in; and I don't know what I should have done if a young man who had come to fetch a girl off the boat had not offered me a seat in his *calèche*.

This was the more courteous on his part if, as I suspect, I made the third who destroys company. When we came to the river—where a ferry boat was to take us across—the cabman demanded a dollar more than his fare, which my friend stoutly refused to pay, and shouldering his portmanteau, he took off his hat and wished me good-night. I was in evil case, for the beast of a cabman refused to give me my luggage till I paid him his demands. However, I was determined not to be bluffed, and climbed on to the box and pulled down my traps by myself, resolving that if the *cocher* interfered I would accidentally drop one on his porcine head. He fortunately did nothing but look on and swear.

After the ferry boat had landed us across the river there were plenty of *calèches* to be got, and I was quickly being driven up the steepest street I ever saw to the Frontenac Hotel. I got into bed at 2 a.m., and didn't waste much time going to sleep.

August 31.

My birthday; am twenty-four years old. Try to get a bath and fail, but the porridge at breakfast is excellent.

The Frontenac Hotel is new, and the sightliest building of its kind I ever remember to have seen. It is built after the manner of an old French *château*, with tall peaked towers, small windows and a flagged courtyard, over which the *calèches* rattle noisily. The dining room is a handsome room, tapestried and sombre, with a great stone fireplace and mullioned windows; one could fancy oneself in a country house. What a pity that European hostelries do not imitate these methods! Life would then be robbed of half its terrors.

After breakfast I drove out in a *calèche* to see the town. I suppose it is the steepest city in the world; there is hardly a gradient less than Windsor hill, and some of the streets look as if no shod animal could ever get up them.

The great feature of Quebec is its Gallicism. The language is French, the names are French, the architecture is French, the people look French. I found it a most fascinating place. Apart from its splendid position, standing on a cliff above the St. Lawrence, shut in on two sides by a broad belt of river, beyond which the wooded heights of Port Lévis are masted against the western (?) sky, and the Lawrentian mountains tower up towards the east (?)—it has the indescribable charm which an old continental city has for most lovers of the picturesque, and which one least of all things expects to find on first landing in a British colony.

The tall, wooden, gabled houses, with their projecting rooms and windows, about which bright coloured garments of every hue flutter in the breeze as they hang drying; the narrow cobbled streets; the names of the streets and shop-keepers; the cries of the hucksters—all these seemed to carry me back to what I had ever read or dreamed of medieval France—a place wherein some slim, blue-eyed girl should be growing up like some white rose unfolding to the womanhood of Madame de Maintenon, or within whose purlieus some schoolboy

tyrant was darkly planning cruelties that later should make him infamous as the man Marat.

I told my Jehu to take me everywhere, and at last we got into a tiny street called *Sous le Cap*—the Seven Dials of Quebec—so narrow that the *calèche* could only just manage to squeeze in between the overhanging houses on either hand, while the changes of raiment of the inhabitants, suspended from window to window, made a series of triumphal arches along our route. This funny little street was paved with thin boards which gave forth a hollow rumble as our equipage rolled by; as though some deep cellars yawned underneath. I was rather relieved when we got out on to firm ground again.

French predominance in Quebec is displayed in various inoffensive ways. Out of a population of 85,000, 70,000 are of French origin. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that Wolfe's tall monumental column on the Heights of Abraham is being suffered silently to fall into decay; whereas the statue of the gallant Montcalm in one of the open places of the town is scrupulously tended.

In this little sin of omission crops out by the waters of the St. Lawrence that national spirit of passionate regret for what has been lost and sympathy for him who was vanquished which yearly clothes afresh with *immortelles* and tears the sad figure of Strasburg on the banks of the Seine.

Other evidence is afforded by the names of shopkeepers; in the course of a whole day's ramble I only came across one shop bearing a British name; but that gentleman certainly seemed to attempt, by the grandiloquence of his pretensions, to atone for the paucity of his congeners, for he described himself as: "H. Williams, capillary and tonsorial artist."

I think nothing is so remarkable to the traveller who delights in the contemplation of the British Empire as the

diabolical ingenuity of our governmental methods. I say diabolical because it must appear in that light to those other nations who have brought far more political experience and acumen to bear on the subject of colonisation than we have, and yet whom we have easily distanced in the race.

The Frenchman says: "This is my town; I have conquered it; therefore hither will I send a governor, a deputy-governor, a commissioner, an inspector of police, an army, a police force, a *douane*. Of the savings of the sleek burghers will I take toll in the shape of heavy taxes, that my army of officials may eat and be filled. Thus shall an impertinent upstart people acknowledge the sceptre of La France and all things shall redound to her glory."

But the Englishman merely says: "I shan't interfere with you fellows unless you play the ass."

And interfere he does not, unless it is to benefit the great masses by removing hostile tariffs, by repressing internal disorders, or by crushing a neighbouring foe. He becomes one of them, subject to the same laws, the laws that he himself has made, and proves his overlordship, not by wearing a gold braided uniform or amassing a fortune by corruption, but by the exploitation of industries, by the improvement of communications, and by the fostering of a spirit of enterprise begotten of the knowledge that under British rule there is for every man equality of opportunity.

It seemed to me a splendid thing that a handful of men in the fort (200) and three small cruisers on the waters below should suffice to keep seventy thousand Frenchmen mindful of their relation to the Empire they had gradually come to inherit.

Quebec is a subject about which much might be said: its history—a see-saw of attacks from without and revolts from within; its institutions—the curious spectacle of

seventy thousand Frenchmen governing themselves and their conquerors in the interests of the latter; its personality—lovable old-world city sleeping in an oasis of green in the country where the predominant prairie waste is only a little less hideous than the jerry-built towns it surrounds.

I asked my driver if Lord Aberdeen, the Governor-General, was popular (for nobody can help noticing the extraordinary veneration paid to the memory of Lord Dufferin's rule; I wondered if his successors were not somewhat overpowered by it).

"Yes," he replied, "he's popular enough, but it's Lady Aberdeen that's the real ruler; she's got a head on her—that's what's the matter with her."

This does not appear to be such a very baleful disease to suffer from, after all; and I dare say the fair patient has no intention of getting cured.

At 2.45 p.m. I took the C.P.R. (the universal abbreviation for Canadian Pacific Railway) to Montreal; we were due there at 8.5, and arrived at 9.15. Lieut. Lamb, R.N., and his son—who were fellow-passengers on the *Vancouver*—were in my compartment, and I began talking to him about H.M.S. *Canada*, *Crescent* and *Magician*, which we had seen lying in the river at Quebec. The lieutenant is an emaciated, rheumatic, dyspeptic kind of little man, and takes gloomy views of men and things. He regards it as certain that France and Russia will combine against us: "And then," he cried triumphantly, "where will our supplies be? We shall all starve; starve, I tell you, sir! That is why I have sent one son already to British Columbia, and am taking another there now: *I* don't want to see my children starved to death before my eyes at home."

From his tone you would have inferred that one of the commonest and most approved of parental pastimes in England was the spectacle of offspring being slowly done

to death for want of sustenance, and the poor little man seemed to take such delight in the heroic prospect of his own starvation (for which, from his appearance, he had evidently been in training some time) that from my rejoinders you would never have guessed that I ever expected to sniff a plum pudding again.

In the same carriage too was a small boy with a head as big as a large pumpkin; water on the brain, presumably, or perhaps an embryo Washington. I puzzled over this for some time, but concluded that the odds were in favour of the fluid.

C.P.R. officials are insolent ruffians, jack-in-office Dogberrys, more like Frenchmen than Christians.

Drove to Windsor Hotel, a long way from the station, and there found J. W. and his wife, with whom I supped, and thereafter had a long smoke with the former, who is one of the very best sort.

To-morrow is Sunday. That reminds me of an enigmatical remark of my driver of this morning, when I commented on the number of churches in Quebec. "Yes," he said, "too much religion is rotting this town."

My leg is rather sore, for going down one of Quebec's many precipices this morning the *calèche* gave such a jump that it threw me right out on to the off wheel, from which I just managed to scramble back with no worse hurt than a torn trouser and an abrasion. This tends to show how bad are the hills, and how good the *calèche*-springs, in fair Quebec.

September 1.

The Windsor Hotel is modelled on American lines and is smart in every detail. The dining-room is a very large one, with a frieze of paintings of well-known English places, not at all badly done. The hall is large, too, and flanked with stalls where cigars, sweets, caps, bags, umbrellas and such-like things are to be bought.

It is always full of men smoking and alas! spitting. There, too, is the office, where a very amusing Scotchman, fat, clean-shaven, and of a most humorous expression, held sway.

He had a number of pieces of cardboard on which were printed in large letters remarks of the following kind: "Yes, it is very warm." "No, thanks; I never drink." "Good morning." "I have heard that before" —and so on; and when some unsuspecting visitor came up to offer Mr. McConochie a drink, or to pass the time of day, or to make a remark on the weather, he would be amazed and somewhat disconcerted to see Mr. McConochie silently hoist a printed rejoinder into the metal holder behind his head and gravely proceed with his work.

My room at the Windsor is redolent of some very unpleasant odour; what it is I cannot exactly diagnose, but I think it proceeds from underground cellars beneath where they store butter and meat, and all that kind of thing. I breakfasted late this morning, with the J.-W.'s, and then walked up with them to the mountain, meeting on the way B. and his sister, Mrs. F., driving, who invited us to tea. The "mountain" of Montreal is only a mountain by comparison and courtesy; anywhere else it would be called a small hill; and the fact that one goes up to the top in a lift does not tend to impress one with its size. From the summit, however, you get a charming view of a red-brick city thickly dotted with green, with the great viaduct spanning the river beyond and disappearing as a thin streak in the haze that clothes the horizon of those vast alluvial flats. The walks and drives over the mountain are pretty; the pines are there, with their delightful sough and resinous smell, and for those who, like myself, hate roads, there are mossy walks and russet aisles of stems, and nooks where the cranberry nestles in the shadow of the bracken. The Protestant

cemetery over the brow of the mountain is, I should imagine, the loveliest burial-ground in the world; Happy Valley at Hong Kong not excepted; it seems to be just a waving wood of birch and pine till the eye catches sight of the grey funereal stones dotted here and there amid the green.

The people of Inverness boast of their cemetery, and the people of Victoria (Hong Kong) of theirs; but I would choose myself to sleep the long sleep beneath the mountain-top by Montreal.

After a very late lunch we started out, gluttonously enough, to tea with Mrs. F. at a house in Peel, which I suppose is the local Grosvenor Square. She was a nice-looking and very pleasant woman, which was all the more creditable to her, since her home was not at that time expressly designed to evoke cheerfulness; for she told me that both she and her husband were undergoing Dr. Salisbury's cure, which apparently consisted in doing nothing but eating raw beef minced up very small, and drinking a prodigious quantity of hot water!

Like Lord Derby, I think I should have preferred the gout. Not that she had the gout; I inferred it was indigestion, and her husband had got sciatica; yet the same treatment was held to be efficacious in both cases. One alternative seemed to me to stand out distinct and clear through all that chaotic haze of beef and water, and that was that either all the doctors I had ever heard of were fools, or that Dr. Salisbury's methods were mere charlatanism. You, my dear Vera, can take your choice; only when you get married and your husband catches scarlet fever, and you develop a toothache, and you both sit down comfortably together to devour raw beef and hot water, for goodness' sake don't tell the great doctor I said so.

Entertaining under these circumstances must have been a deed of more than ordinary fortitude; for Mrs. F.

confessed to me that the sight of a piece of bread and butter filled her with a ravenous frenzy, and the aroma of a cup of tea drove her almost crazy with desire. On one occasion, about a month before, she told me, her appetite had got loose and devoured half a tin of biscuits before it could be caught and tied up. This lapse had to be confessed with tears and vows to Father Salisbury, who, I believe, kept the unfortunate lady a week or two longer on his fiendish diet by way of penance and expiation.

September 2.

Got up at 6.30 in order to catch boat at 8, to go down the Lachine rapids. The J.-W.'s were very late, but we caught the train, and then at once rushed on to the first boat we could see, which turned out to be the wrong one, and we were taken to St. Annes, eighteen miles up the Ottawa river before we could get off. This is the kind of fool's trick that comes so naturally to me. Now we had nothing to do but to get back to Montreal and try again. But the day was sunny and warm, and the little bungalows at St. Annes were pleasant to look upon, and there were lots of flowers to compare with old friends at home, and a few apples to knock down stealthily and eat rapidly. So we didn't do at all badly.

When we got back to Montreal we went and had a look at the two great churches of the city—St. Peter's and Notre Dame. These two edifices aim at reproducing their namesakes, but the result is rather shoddy. Notre Dame looks like wood smeared with mud, and the maple-wood Lady Chapel (which is thought a great deal of) we considered simply vulgar.

There are almost as many churches in Montreal as there are in Oxford. I wonder what my Quebec coach-man would have said about it?

After lunch I went with J.-W. to the Hudson Bay

Company's Store to help him buy furs, and we chose some charming things for his wife, till that lady herself arrived and discarded them. As she seemed to have an extremely bad taste in toques I left the loving couple to disfigure themselves at their leisure. We met subsequently, however, and together successfully accomplished the Lachine Rapids.

These are certainly wonderful; they roar and foam and swirl over the rocks like maddened beasts with backs arched springing on to their prey. A certain Indian called Big John negotiates them in a canoe, and takes people with him for a consideration; but how the boat lives in that flood I can't imagine. I would have liked to see Big John go down to the sea in his ship; but unfortunately I never got the chance. The best view I got of Montreal was when leaving the steamer in the dusk; the city lay dim and blue in the purple haze, and beyond it loomed the dark mass of the mountain.

September 3.

Spent some time in the new St. Peter's; it is decorated in the white and gold style of the French cathedral at Quebec, but is not nearly so fine a building as the latter. It is superior to Notre Dame, however.

Canadian women seem to be ugly and the men very handsome, whereas the reverse seems to be the case across the border. Different towns appear to reverse the relation between the sexes: in Montreal the men were a much venerated lot: they had a magnificent club, they kept a pack of foxhounds and gave balls and parties; in short, they were all very gay dogs; but in Toronto all this is changed; the men slink off obediently to their counting houses after breakfast, while their fair relations saunter down to their clubs to arrange a ball, break a bottle of wine, or get up a race meeting.

Naturally, all the men are ambitious to migrate to

Montreal, while the ladies regard Toronto as containing all that makes life worth the living. After lunch I made the ascent of the mountain again, alone, and got another glorious view. I think there is no lovelier blend of colours than the red of tile roofs against the green of chestnut trees—and that is the view of Montreal from the mountain.

Do you remember that picture on the stairs at home? Like all other pictures, it gave me a very poor idea of the reality; but I could never look down on the city in the plain without thinking of our old friend. Montreal being composed to a great extent of the wealthy class, there are lots of riders and drivers about. The riding horses are all English, and the driving horses American.

Took a ticket for Toronto and went into dinner. As I walked out rather early to catch my train I felt a great smack on my leg, and turned round prepared to slay my antagonist. It turned out to be nobody worse than old Mike F.,* who is conducting what he familiarly calls his "pup" round the world. Bear-leading of this type seems to be a nice business, for F. has grown sleek and well-liking upon it. People used to send their sherry round the world to improve it; and now they do the same with their sons, ostensibly for the same reason. It sounds rather like one of Dr. Salisbury's patent remedies, but I dare say it works out all right in the end.

F. has got his fellowship at Trinity, and as dean is condemned for ever to extinguish bonfires and attend early chapel. I suppose it is a subject for congratulation, and so I congratulate. He hurriedly scrawls me an introduction to the Rajah of Jodhpur, with whom he has had some excellent pig-sticking; and with profuse thanks I am swallowed up in the night.

I excelled myself soon afterwards by walking into a private cabin on the train (which I mistook for the

* The present Bishop of St. Albans.

smoking room), where I was received with mingled growls and execrations. The growls came from a man; the execrations from a lady whose ablutions, in airy costume, I had thus unceremoniously interrupted. I depart with apologies, and try to go to sleep in a temperature than cannot be far off ninety degrees Fahr. !

September 4.

Train two hours late at Toronto; I walked up to the hotel and got there about half-past nine. As I walked into the hall, who should I see come strolling out of the dining-room, chewing a toothpick and clad in the same dirty old Norfolk jacket and red otter-hunting waistcoat that we all knew so well at home, but Wynnie S.

Poor dear old Wyndham! It seems so hard to realise that the kindly heart has ceased to beat, and the cheery voice is silent for ever. Yet out he came, looking for all the world as if he were on his way down to the river to tell Bishop to get the boat ready, and though he saw me he took no notice at all. So I hailed him and shook him warmly by the hand, for I was overjoyed at meeting him so unexpectedly in so distant a land. "Hello," said Wyndham presently, "it's you, is it, Reggie? I didn't recognise yer, yer look such a blackguard."

This was the fault of my nascent beard, to which, I must tell you, I had never applied the steel since leaving England. I did look a fairish ruffian certainly; something between a bargee before his weekly shave and a stage brigand; but it was better to look thus than to flourish a razor on board ship or in the train. After I'd had my breakfast we settled to start together at once for Niagara; as Wynnie hadn't been there, and the following day he was obliged to start for New York on his way home.

When we got down to the station Wyndham began hunting all over the place for a certain tin case of his; he interviewed porters and stormed at guards; but the

case was not to be found. We were walking to the platform where our Niagara train was to start from, considering the case lost beyond all redemption, when suddenly we came upon several workmen painting part of the iron supports of the roofs. There, peacefully resting on two ancient casks, was Wyndham's tin case, and upon the case sat a couple of painters, working away as merrily as if they'd never seen a tin case in their lives. The impudence of the thing was too much for us, and we laughed till the unsuspecting workmen must have thought us demented.

However, they looked rather foolish when we told them to take the case to the luggage office. Nobody likes to be told to do anything in Canada; it is the most independent place you ever heard of. You pay a man to be your servant; but if he doesn't want to it's ten chances to one he'll refuse to do what you tell him. Get rid of him, you'd say. Yes, but in the mountains in the backwoods it is impossible to get a substitute; that's where the shoe pinches the tenderfoot.

While we were waiting for our train, a rather fussy-looking guard went by, carrying in either hand a basket of very tempting plums. A jocular porter thought he'd have some fun, so he went up quietly behind the guard and bagged two or three plums out of one of the baskets. But he wasn't quite up to the professional standard, and the guard nailed him, and was exceeding wrath, and made him pay up in cash on the spot for the fruit he had defiled with his unrighteous fingers.

The jest began by being all in the porter's favour; but it ended up quite the other way. I was sorry for the porter, for the guard seemed a sour-tempered wretch and I trust he ate too many plums and got a colic.

The tiny steam-tram line that takes one up to Niagara runs through some moor-like country, and at last one is carried right alongside the mighty river. It is a grand

sight to see that huge volume of water surging and foaming over the rocks; quite as fine a sight, I think, as the Falls themselves. As I looked down at the place where Captain Webb was drowned I was involuntarily forced to admire the courage of the man who could commit himself to that fearful maelstrom. He may have been a madman, but at all events he was a good-plucked one.

We took a cab to the Falls, not without an altercation with the driver, who asked W. if he thought he was a fool. W. told him that he hadn't known him long enough to decide; but that he shaped well. This *pourparler*, as the diplomats phrase it, did not achieve the desired effect of accelerating a definite arrangement of the question at issue.

After gazing silently for a long time at the Falls (which I am not going to try to describe; they baffle all description) we retired into the store close by to don the waterproof suit which protects the clothes of the enterprising visitor to the inner side of the Falls.

At that time I laboured under a grievous mistake. I imagined one could go right behind the Horsehoe Fall, so that one should creep cautiously along a slimy ledge with millions of tons of green water thundering down beside one into the abyss, and a storm of vaporous spray filling one's eyes and mouth. That would have been something like an expedition; only unfortunately it is a sheer impossibility. What actually we did was dull as the trickle of ditch water that spattered over our heads, and tame as the old guide who made fools of us. But what time we donned our heavy oilskin raiment, ponderous sea-boots and Esquimaux caps (just like the things we used to play in at the Wall at Eton) we were ignorant of the impending disillusioning, and marvelled to see a very stout middle-aged woman clad like ourselves (which accentuated most unfortunately the salient exuberances of her figure) as though she too were about to attempt the

same feats of lofty daring. From that moment I feared I had over-rated the difficulties of the crawl behind the opaque green wall, and as the minutes passed my fear grew to torture.

This pestilent and importunate female, of hideous mien, persisted in attaching herself to us, all our efforts to throw her off notwithstanding; but when we got on to the pathway over the rocks we made the pace a little too hot for her, and she was forced to relinquish the chase. This "going under the fall," as it is mendaciously described by the persons interested in the letting out of oilskin suits, is one of the biggest frauds I have ever been deluded by. You go solemnly down in a lift (or "elevator," as they call them wherever the Yankee's linguistic influence prevails) attended by a guide of portentous gravity (as though one was bent on a quest of fearful danger, and it was a mercy if ever one should, as Homer puts it, see country and wife and dear children again), and all of a sudden you think it is raining, and look up to see which way the clouds are blowing. But not a bit of it; this is the Fall! under which you remain for ten seconds, if you walk at an ordinary pace, and then you are out of it again on the farther side. Then you come back, disgusted and annoyed, and probably get photographed as W. and I did, sitting together on a rock, which is afterwards put on a photograph of the Horsehoe Fall in such a way as to induce the belief that you are sitting on nothing in the middle of the river with a million tons of water going down the small of your back.

That is true art—of the best American type, and not extra cheap either. Niagara is the dearest place I encountered in my travels; we kept on the Canadian side of the Falls, but the prices were redolent of New York. I'm afraid the unsophisticated Canadian has been demoralised by the near proximity of Jonathan; or per-

haps Jonathan himself, foreseeing a "soft thing," has monopolised the hotels beyond his borders.

At all events, at the Clifton House (of which, thrifty traveller, beware!) we had one of those nondescript, mongrel, unsatisfying meals which, as a child, I used to abuse under the name of "high tea"; it began with porridge, if I remember aright, and ended up with bread and jam. Nothing very dissolute so far, and coffee was our only drink. Then we had a double-bedded room between us, and breakfast at 6.30 the next morning. Whether they made us pay for having it so early, or whether they considered we ate more than two men's share, I cannot tell; but I know that my half of the bill amounted to six dollars and twenty-five cents, or just about twenty-six shillings!

One would not have minded if one had had a good dinner washed down by a generous vintage; but to pay all that for porridge and jam, and perhaps a dubious egg! The idea maddened us, and I'm afraid we expressed our views very pointedly to the hotel keeper, who was a surly dog. By the time we left he was surlier and more dogged than ever.

September 5.

Here I parted from W., much to my sorrow; he went home and I went on my travels. Less than a year from that day I was staying with him in England, and a year later, almost to a day, I was walking as a mourner behind his coffin towards the little church on the hill. Dear Wyndham! In you I mourn a good sportsman, a merry wit and a kind true heart.

When I got back again to Toronto I discovered that I had about ten minutes—thanks to the lateness of the train—in which to pay my bill and get my traps from the Queen's Hotel before starting with the J.-W.'s for Winnipeg. This was a hopeless task; but I attempted

it. As I rushed into the hotel I noticed a great crowd of very smart-looking youths got up in cricketing costume; but I hadn't much time to do anything but push rudely through them to the "office" and call for my bill. "What name?" said the clerk.

As I gave my name I heard at least half a dozen voices exclaim: "What you here?" and, turning round, I found a lot of old Eton and Oxford friends, who had come out to play cricket against the New Yorkers and Philadelphians—representing Oxford and Cambridge. I rushed off to the station, but I had missed the train. J.-W. had taken my heavy luggage, and there was nothing to do but to follow as soon as might be. So I returned to the Queen's Hotel and had a pleasant hour or two's chat with some people I hadn't seen for years. They all combined to insult my beard, which vexed me. It seemed to me curious then, as now, that in the course of two days I should have stumbled across seven or eight old friends in the very middle of Canada; and it brought home to me with great force the truth of the saying that, after all, the world is a very small place.

Soon after noon I got on board the train for Winnipeg. The country about here is covered with rocks, scrub and pines, with here and there a small bit of grazing or corn land enclosed by a huge log fence, but the general impression is that of bleak and sterile unproductiveness —which even the bright September sunlight could not drive away. In winter this belt of country between the Atlantic and the prairie must be cold and cheerless almost beyond endurance.

September 6.

Got several peeps at Lake Superior, a magnificent sheet of water fringed as far as eye could see by thick woods of pine. Life on board a Pullman is not so terrible as might be imagined; its worst of blemishes are heat, dirt,

and draughtiness. There is a capital dining-car attached to the train where all can get excellent food; there are unparalleled opportunities for getting through a vast amount of reading, and the society of the smoking-room at the end of the train is diverse and amusing.

One of our cheeriest passengers was a certain Paymaster Chaster—an Irishman—who had got leave from his ship at Halifax, and was going west. He was travelling with a prodigious flask of whisky, which would contain, he asserted, a bottle and a half of the beloved fluid, and certainly it looked as if it might hold half a bucketful. That was a very cyclops among flasks, beside which the ordinary race appeared as diminutive as a citizen of Lilliput in the company of a Brobdignagian.

The Paymaster was very generous in the use he made of his liquor, and everybody declared, I should say with truth, that it was the best stuff they ever had tasted. The Paymaster looked very knowing at this, and replied that it wasn't bad in itself at all, but the best thing about it was that it had never paid a red cent of duty. Besides whisky, the Paymaster was a great admirer of other products of the red-faced god, and he frequently besought one most hospitably to join him in a bottle of "champaggny water."

Another of the frequenters of the smoking car was an exiled Pole—a smart-looking young fellow—who told us he had been banished from his country on account of the part he had taken in politics. He didn't say he was a count, but of course he must have been. At that time he was acting in the humble capacity of "drummer" for a commercial firm. A "drummer" in Canada represents what we call in England a bagman, and what calls itself a commercial traveller. This Canadian Pole was the only bagman I ever met in a railway carriage whose conversation was not confined to such topics as the food at one hotel, the beds at another, and the prices

at a third. It is a pity more of them are not banished Poles.

He told us that he had a brother in Siberia, and considered himself lucky not to be there himself. He was extremely moderate in his language, but he conveyed the idea that if the Czar and his advisers got into his hands it had been better for them that they had never been born. He remarked that the Czar was practically a prisoner in his own palaces, and that he fancied the day was not far distant which should rise upon him living and set upon him dead.

When I looked at that man's face and thought of what he was, and then of what he might have been in a free country, I could not help wishing that the exile's words might come true.*

September 7.

Some other passengers bound towards the distant point where the farthest west merges imperceptibly into the farthest east were a missionary and his two daughters. They used to sit near me on the cross-benches that fringe the long gangway down the cars and read devotional books all the day long. I cannot help respecting missionaries—there is something so grand about the idea of giving up all that men prize in this life for the sake of saving souls of a heathen race. Not that this is the ideal of all missionaries—far from it; many of them are mere spiritual adventurers, trading in dogmas and phrases with the unregenerate for the sake of the fleshpots that accrue in the bartering. I have seen so many who were palpably of this sort that I have learned to discriminate roughly between the sheep and the goats.

I believe this man and his daughters were of the right kind. But I could not help feeling then, and I feel it ten times more now, after having been to many countries

* I have since changed my opinion.

where the Christian religion is not dominant, and where, consequently, missionaries live and work, that these single-minded people have misconceived the spirit of Christ's teaching as interpreted by the universal conscience of the world. For there is nothing in the life and teaching of Christ that is not part and parcel of the inner voice that speaks within the soul of every sentient human being; it is comprehended in this saying: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."

And if our men of religion had followed in the steps of our men of science, and refrained from formulating dogmatic assertions where countless exceptions forbid a general induction, wars on behalf of a creed had never devastated Europe, and missionaries at the present time would not be seeking to "convert" the heathen. Because that is the objective of the missionary he cares not whether a black man leads a moral life, is a good father, a kind husband and a laborious citizen; he is not a Protestant, and therefore he must be "converted." A Roman Catholic missionary is on the same ground, and these two are deadly rivals and enemies in the pursuit of souls. What a gigantic mockery of the love and brotherhood taught by Christ! Here are the representatives of two sects, both of them nominally founded on His doctrines, and one "perverts" and the other "converts."

It seems extraordinary that, in this *fin de siècle* age, when new ideas and discoveries are opening up a vista into regions that trend towards the Infinite, the ordinary methods of science have not been applied to the interpretation of religious problems. Does the God who allows two or three hundred million beings to worship Buddha as the type of all that is most lovable, and therefore divine, intend them to perish everlastingly? Is not the most prominent feature of cosmic religion the variety of personage, but yet the similarity of attribute? What does it matter that Christ said: "Love thy neighbour as thyself" if Buddha said it, and Confucius and Mahommed too?

All religions, creeds and dogmas are the rind and morality is the kernel. When Christ said: "Go ye forth into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" He did not want to "convert" the world; He wanted to make it better; and as Wesley, in his latter years disclaimed Wesleyanism, so I suggest would Christ in these latter days disclaim the current, rabid, proselytising Christianity.

What do we, worms of earth, know of the nature of God? What Christian can presume to boast that the Athanasian creed is a reality to him? And why should the senseless repetition of unmeaning contradictions make a savage better? Rather let the Christian and the Buddhist bow their heads together under the open vault of heaven, and pray that they may both so live as to enjoy in this life that peace which the world cannot give.

At 4 p.m. to-day we arrived at Winnipeg, and the Paymaster and I set out to walk through the town to our hotel. Winnipeg is the most hideous, dreariest, dirtiest place I have ever been in. The streets are very broad and ploughed up in all directions into ruts two feet deep, so that it is a perfect marvel how the spider-wheeled carriages avoid being upset when a wheel gets into a rut. Probably because both wheels are in ruts. At night there are electric lights about three hundred yards apart, and you fall headlong into pools and bogs in the gloom, or get run over by the trams that cleave their way through the morasses of the highway. The pavements are planked with sections of fir-tree jammed together. The result is unequal and unsatisfactory. But all these drawbacks seemed details in the company of the genial Paymaster. His universal practice was to take a good look at every woman he met in the street and invariably to compare favourably her personal attractions with those of a Maltese policeman. Why he selected this remarkable standard by which to judge of the beauty of Canadian women I am at a loss to know; but as it

seemed to afford him a great deal of harmless pleasure I forbore to question him too closely.

Since I have seen Maltese policemen, I cannot help thinking that the compliment to the fair Canadians lay more in the sentiment than in the reality.

Soon after five I parted from my cheery friend, who went on his way to Sydney; I took a room at Manitoba Hotel, dined and went to bed.

September 8.

Got up late and took a long walk into the scrub that encircles Winnipeg as with a garment. The country round is absurdly flat and devoid of trees; it is desolate in the extreme. I walked to the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine rivers; the latter is a big stream, but totally devoid of beauty. There are no rocks, steep banks or rushing shallows to break the dead level of fullness.

When I got back to the hotel I was civilly accosted by a man in the lobby who requested me to favour him with the remarks on English politics which I had promised. This rather surprised me, as I am not in the habit of lecturing on politics the moment I set foot in a strange town, and I refused to comply; but the reporter of the *Winnipeg Herald* (or some such paper) stuck to his guns and declared with warmth that I was none other than the person who had promised to provide "copy." As I saw there was some mistake I sent for the list of visitors in the hotel, and found that Mr. M., M.P., was amongst them. Here was the man! A real, live, British Member of Parliament, competent to make the fortune of any colonial paper by reason of the weight and probability of his political vaticinations! I put the reporter on the right scent, and next day there appeared a long article in the local Press on the subject of the distinguished stranger from the British Senate, concluding with some extremely cryptic utterances from the honourable member's own lips. These were calculated to pre-

serve M.'s reputation as a sage to the end of time, for they defied refutation, so skilfully ambiguous were they; but they seem to have satisfied the reporter, and doubtless they satisfied the public.

I expect to find, if I visit Winnipeg again, a colossal statue of M., M.P., "politician, prophet and friend of Canada," guarding the liberties of the Winnipeggites from some lofty coign of vantage in the main street. This little incident served to introduce me to M., in whom I found a talented and amusing companion, and we then and there struck up a friendship.

In the afternoon I went down to the station and met the five o'clock train, which conveyed J.-W. and his wife, together with all my heavy luggage. I was mightily pleased to see them all again, and we all went and had tea together at the restaurant of one Delmonico. As the J.-W.'s had gone by steamer over the lakes their arrival at Winnipeg was thus later than mine, though I had left Toronto after them. They had gone by water to see the lakes, and as I went by train I got to my destination sooner. In an hour's time the J.-W.'s had to take the train again for Moosomi, and I said good-bye to them with much regret, for I felt that in all probability we should never meet again, and it is extraordinary how quickly friendships cement between congenial spirits in distant lands.

J.-W. was a remarkable little man; he was about thirty-three, and looked twenty-two. He has seen more of real roughing it in the backwoods than most men twice his age; he went out West at sixteen, and though he had always had an allowance of four hundred a year, through the difficulty of drawing it, and one cause and another, he had often been forced to take the humblest jobs to get a living. Once he was cook to a lot of horse ranchers, and had to get up at five and cook beef steaks. That he considered very nasty work. His stock of stories was inexhaustible, and he made very quaint remarks.

One day on the ship a boy threw a banana skin and hit J.-W. on the back of the neck. "If that boy was a bit bigger," said J.-W., "I'd punch his head. As it is, I do think his mother might apologise or at least offer me the banana."

Two of his tales occur to me now. A well-known liar was yarning about his performances with the gun to a bored and yawning audience. "Wal, I assure you that, seated on them telegraph wires, all in a heap, there was a golden eagle, a parrot, five ducks, two prairie hens and a turkey; and I just fired at them and killed 'em all as dead as mutton!" Nobody even so much as stared. "And a ha-a-re!" roared the discomfited raconteur.

Another time a man was travelling across the prairie on his horse, armed with his faithful muzzle-loader. Suddenly he came to a large tree, and there, seated in the branches, was a huge grizzly. "That bear's my meat," said the traveller, but on loading his piece he discovered he had shot away all his bullets and had only powder left. But this did not in the least exhaust the resources of this wonderful man. He pulled the nails out of his horse's shoes, loaded his gun with them, shot the bear, cut it open, extracted the nails, replaced them in his horse's feet, and continued his journey with the bearskin dangling from his saddlebow.

September 9.

The only interesting, or even decent looking, object in Winnipeg is the ruined remains of Fort Garry, built about 1670 by the Hudson Bay Company as a defence against Indians. It is the picturesque nidus which has in these latter days given birth to the ugly duckling Winnipeg. The ruins consist only of a low tower containing the main gate into the Fort; and very soon, I should imagine, even this relic of the past will have disappeared, for I noticed two great cracks in the masonry over the gateway, and the seeds of disintegration

were even then springing to blossom in the crannies. I dare say, if the old gate could speak, it would tell us some murky tales of rapine and blood.

This morning I went to get some money from the bank, with my Letter of Indication in my pocket. Never travel with a Letter of Indication; it is a useless anachronism. What it indicates it is hard to tell; certainly not where one can get money, for one very often is refused it by the suspicious bank people in out-of-the-way places; certainly it does not indicate who one is, for on this particular occasion I was astounded to hear from the clerk that unless I identified myself I should not be able to draw any money. Identify oneself in an out-of-the-way hole like Winnipeg! What an extravagant demand to make of any self-respecting Englishman! How can a person identify himself? The operation must resemble a puppy running round and round after its own tail. I produced a letter addressed to myself; that had no effect on the obdurate clerk; he presumed, I suppose, that I had just stolen it from the pocket of my Sunday-go-to-meeting coat. So much for identification. He suggested that I knew somebody in Winnipeg who would identify me. I told him I was glad I knew nobody in Winnipeg, but that I had heard of a man who was agent for my father, who had never seen me, and did not know me from Adam; but that if his identification would do I might possibly get it. This seemed to satisfy this blatant red-tapeist, and I departed to interview Mr. C. H.-W., who, of course, had gone off for a fortnight's fishing on Winnipeg Lake, hundreds of miles away. This made me desperate. M., I knew, was away calling on the local bigwig, so I returned to the bank and threw myself on the mercy of the officials, producing a handkerchief marked with my name in full as a last card. It acted as a flag of truce; hostilities ceased; I was given the money, and ere I left the bank I had the satisfaction of feeling that I was identified; I was myself now, in the eyes of all

Winnipeg, and no longer a miserable duplicate of my certified and registered *alter ego*.

Soon after five I started, in company with M., for Banff.

September 10.

Prairie, and nothing but it for thousands of miles. It is amusing to sit on the end of the smoking car and watch the bright metals stretching back in a bee-line to the horizon miles and miles away. Whenever the train stops a crowd of Indians appear with buffalo horns for sale, generally arranged so as to form a rack to hang hats on, or else in a peculiar triangular shape. We pass through hundreds of miles of wheat country, of which there is a very good crop this year. This has given a fillip to C.P.R. stock, which has risen from 55 to 74. The Honourable Somebody W. on board, a great Canadian swell, and a director of the C.P.R. He appears to be a gamelegged, vulgar, shock-headed ruffian. He stops the train at Medicine Hat (good name that) in order to inspect an Orange Lodge, where a band plays round a pole in a nice flower garden, and admiring spectators hold flaming torches.

Lots more Indians. One foolish youth off the train tries to carry on a mild flirtation with some bepainted squaw rather better-looking than the rest, till he is warned by a friend that he has spied a tomahawking husband lurking in the shadow. The youth at once flees into the inmost recesses of the train. Whenever the train stops for more than ten minutes, be it in the cold grey hour of dawn or under the raging noontide sun, M. is always to be seen rushing at full speed round the station-adjoining prairie, in his shirt-sleeves, his coat on his back, trying to secure a little exercise. I went with him once, and made the pace so hot that he missed two stations at least, if not more, before he got out for another little run. M. is a very methodical man; he was a scholar at Winchester and New College, and consequently what-

ever he does is ordered with the gravity and purpose that befits a scholar and a man of business.

He never thinks of stirring out before twelve o'clock, generally never till after lunch, but he lies on his bed and devours Blue books or Bryce on the American Commonwealth, or some equally erudite and scholastic work. From his proceedings at the stations you will have gathered that his brain is not cultivated at the expense of his body; there is a well-regulated endeavour to preserve that high ideal—the *mens sana in corpore sano*. One of his rules is never to drink wine before dinner, and one day, when he saw me taking a pint of sherry with my lunch, his face was a picture. For the rest of the afternoon his conversation was redolent of pills and prescriptions. About his health he was somewhat pernickety, as mother would say.

Naturally, such a man was a most entertaining companion; he had travelled too, as well as read everything. He told me of an interview he'd had with Sir John Schultz, ex-premier and a prominent Canadian statesman, since dead, who was taken prisoner in 1869 by the insurgents. His wife was allowed to visit him, and on one occasion she managed to drop a gimlet into his bed, with which he contrived to bore through his prison walls and escape. But his real difficulties began outside the prison; he was obliged to suffer incredible hardships, and walk six hundred miles on foot. This had so undermined his constitution that when M. visited him in Winnipeg (when we two were in that dismal place together), with the thermometer standing at about 70° in the shade, Sir John was crouching in front of a large fire covered with rugs and blankets. He died very soon after this.

It was interesting, in the midst of that vast continent occupied by two different bodies of the Anglo-Saxon race, united in customs, language and affinities, but separated by the diversity of their political problems and aspirations, to learn from books and politicians what

constitute the chief questions of the day in Canada and the United States respectively. As far as I could gather Canada's objects would have to be: (1) to weld together in harmony the various conflicting elements in the Dominion; *e.g.*, the English and French, the Catholics and Protestants—who even as we travelled through the country were fighting a pitched battle over the Manitoba Schools question; and (2) to educate a homogeneous people up to the grasping of the great idea of Imperial Federation. The purely physical question of the development of the country is one, too, to which Canadian Statesmen should pay attention, for after having a good many opinions expressed on the subject of the C.P.R.—the only, or at any rate the principal, agent by which improvement of transport is to open up new industries and bring supplies to new centres—I came to the conclusion that it might be better for the country at large if the directors of the railway were not at the same time the chief men in the councils of the State.

For instance, it is not likely that, if a Bill for the construction of a competitive line, offering to carry goods at lower freight, or proposing to pass through a rich but inaccessible tract, is introduced into an assembly whereof the chief debaters and most influential members are directors of the C.P.R., there will be much chance of such a Bill becoming law. I speak as I found things, without bias and without interest, and I must say that the C.P.R. is a most unpopular institution. It seems to dominate everything; if a man is a large owner of C.P.R. stock he is made an Honourable and directs the affairs of the country; if, on the other hand, he arrives at the topmost rung of the political ladder without any help from the C.P.R., he is at once made a director, with power to stop the train on all occasions when he considers it desirable to address an Orange Lodge; to the great detriment of such travellers as desire to catch a ship at the other end.

A double-barrelled arrangement like the former can

hardly fail to bring many a fat bird into the cooking pots of the C.P.R.; but, as I have before remarked, I doubt if it is the one best adopted to the needs and interests of the Dominion. An old market-gardener at Vancouver summed up the situation for me one day very concisely. He was a Scot and did not care to veil his vehemence beneath the elegancies of polite metaphor: "Well, the whole country stinks of C.P.R. (pronounced say, pay, R-r-r), and it's my opinion that if ye was to catch the verra mosquitoes ye'd find C.P.R. stampit on their backsides."

There is a small party in Canada who desire union with the United States, and another small party trend in the same direction by advocating a *Zollverein* with the States, and hostile tariffs in the case of all other countries. It is a matter for regret that the friends of this unpatriotic and chimerical scheme are headed by a man of such intellectual eminence as Professor Goldwin Smith, of Toronto; but there seems, happily, to be little chance of their realising their projects so long as Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a force in Canadian politics.

Undoubtedly many persons in the United States look forward to a time when they will be able quietly to annex Canada; but I do not think their hopes will ever be realised. Canadians are intensely loyal to their new country, as well as to the old, and they generally regard Americans with a certain amount of suspicion. The Americans will have quite enough to do in the near future without meddling with such vast enterprises as the annexation of Canada, even if the much-paraded Monro doctrine is openly repudiated by the Jingoes, as events in Hawaii and elsewhere seem to render not unlikely. The hostility between East and West is marked and increasing; the rough manners of the uncouth Californians are repugnant to the well-bred Yankees, and the Westerners resent their subordination. I have heard one opinion expressed to the effect that in the course of time the States will probably split up into two great Republics,

of which the line of cleavage will be from north to south; but I dare say this is mere after-dinner babbling.

At all events, what all United Statesmen aim at is the fusion of the ollapodrida of the nationalities that comprise their great country. It will be a long business, and the nigger question complicates it. I believe it is not true that the negroes are increasing faster than the whites, but it is a serious thing to have a few million well-educated, brawny-muscled blackmen in one's country learning slowly to resent being treated by the veriest outcast of a white as if they were no better than the dirt beneath his feet. What are they to do with them? Deport them to Ireland, slay their firstborn, or include them all in one gigantic holocaust? They can't do any of these things. The answer is: "Then you must make their political entity a reality, and not a sham, and rely on the effect of the change thus produced on their character and the estimation in which they are held by those who then will be no longer their superiors gradually to establish amicable working relations between the two colours.

September 11.

Woken up at 5.30 a.m. by the nigger, in order to be ready to get off the train at Banff. I must tell you that all the sleeping car officials are coloured gentlemen, and some of them extremely supercilious and cantankerous gentlemen too. These fellows' work consists in putting out and shutting up the sleeping berths, which by day fold away so that the car looks like an ordinary Pullman with cross-benches and a central gangway; while at night the beds extend from each side four deep, high up to the ceiling; so that the person in the top bunk has to use a ladder to get up to it. A green curtain falls down in front of the bunks, which, of course, you have to part when you want to get into your own particular sanctuary, to the manifest trepidation of all the people in the same house, who, of course, are all in

the crucial stages of undressing. This same process of undressing, on a slab five feet long by three broad, with the train jumping and shaking like a wet dog, is often very difficult. Most people get over the difficulty by not undressing. That fact is certainly in some respects advantageous, for the sexes are not divided off into separate sides of the car, and one night, when making the perilous ascent to my noctural abode, high up in the roof of the flying train, I inadvertently stepped on to the stomach of an old lady in the lowest berth, mistaking it for part of the projecting footboard. I feel sure her clothes saved her a great deal.

People frequently mistake their bunks, and, creeping securely through the green curtain in the dark, put their unguarded hands forcibly down upon the stubbly chin of some unseen occupant. Oh, yes, it is quite a creepy thing sleeping in the cars; you don't know what horrid, whisky-sodden visage may not leer suddenly at you from over the end of your pillow; and I am convinced that on these journeys nervous old maids go to sleep with their right hands clutching a revolver.

Some niggers are terrible martinets, and kick you out of your bunk just when you most want to turn over and go to sleep again. Then there is nothing to be done but to rush off to the meagre apparatus and snatch a fearful wash, with two or three others looking on and cursing your prolixity. Then back to the berth and behind the protecting curtain huddle on the rest of the dusty garments, with regretful thoughts of summer bathes before breakfast in the sea, and clothes spick and span from an English laundry. It certainly does clothes no good to sit in them all day and lie on them all night. But, whether you keep them on or whether you take them off (I refer only to the night season), you are perfectly certain to find your garments, at the end of five days in the cars, resembling nothing so much as the tumbled contents of a dirty clothes basket.

Well, on this particular morning, at 5.30 a.m., in the

midst of the eternal snows, and with the thermometer at about 25° F., I was even speedier than usual about my ablutional and sartorial perfunctions. M. and I proceeded to the "observation car"—a dreary place like a cattle truck, with no seats in it, and no windows, through the lack of which the raw morning air whistled cold and penetrating. M., mindful of the requirements of his peculiar constitution, pretended he was once again on the prairie, and rushed up and down the car like a panther in a menagerie, trying to get warm.

Certainly it was worth a thousand miles of barren rock and scrub and a thousand miles of meaningless prairie to catch the first view of the sun rising behind the perennial snows of the Rockies. The engineering of the C.P.R. through these mountains is in itself a work of fine art, but one forgets the road in the view from it. Here rushing along by the bank of a dashing torrent, anon curling round the edge of some frightful precipice, then swishing up a tremendous gradient into a region where the leaning snow-sheds denote the rigour of those mountain airs, we swept on and on into the heart of the grandest scenery in all America. O for another glimpse of the virgin peaks, rose tipped in the morning sun, rising in majestic tiers towards the west, like white-robed, radiant-faced maidens waiting statue-like for the coming of the bride!

That hour repaid amply all the dull weariness of five thousand miles of sea, scrub and sand.

> Come sound the clarion, fill the fife,
> Let all the breathing world proclaim
> One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name!

M. and I collected our baggage and drove to the C.P.R. Hotel, a picturesque structure set down in the midst of the great mountains. M. said it reminded him of the Engadine, where I have never been, so I am no judge of his veracity on this occasion. There is a splendid large bath at the hotel, and I at once rushed off to have

a bathe, pulling M. with me, much against his will, for he had made up his mind to have his breakfast first. I couldn't permit such pigginess, and M. had to submit. The water was of a sulphurous nature, 80° F., and rather smelly, but wasn't it good after a long spell of the cars!

After the largest breakfast I ever ate in my life, I walked down to present a letter of introduction I had been given by a friend in England to Captain Harper, of the Mounted Police. I found an enormous man of about six feet five and big in proportion sitting in state dispensing justice, and when I came in he was sentencing a malingering train-ride stealer to bread instead of porridge. This change of diet was supposed to be going to effect a cure. The Mounted Police are a very efficient force; but I should think the post of commanding them was no sinecure. A good many of them are gentlemen who have sunk very low, the majority of them are the scum of the country. But they can all ride and fight, and if well kept in order are a formidable lot. I should think Captain Harper was an ideal officer, for he appeared to combine the *suaviter in modo* with the *fortiter in re* in a remarkable manner. How surprised the shammer did look when, expecting meat, he was ordered dry bread!

After arranging to call for the captain in the afternoon and go for a ride with him, I explored the neighbourhood. There are a few houses in Banff, and what there are consist chiefly of sanitoriums for people who go to bathe in the natural sulphur hot springs for the cure of rheumatism and skin diseases. One of these places possessed a lovely grotto hollowed out in the rocks and connected with the air only by a hole, through which the light scintillated over the beautiful blue water. I had a capital swim in a large pool there, with the steam rising in clouds from the surface; and it was very curious to think that in that icy climate this water always maintains its heat, getting, if possible, warmer in winter than in summer. In this pool the water was 94° F.

At one of these baths on the top of a hill, where the water is even hotter than elsewhere, there is a fine collection of crutches, covered with grateful testimonies to the curative properties of the water, left by people who came crippled and went away sound.

Banff is, in fact, the Lourdes of the Far West, and over the whole area of British Columbia this wonderful water wells up out of the seething caldrons of the earth. I suppose that its marvellous efficacy in the case of all the most horrible and dreaded forms of skin-disease has only to be once recognised by European doctors in order to transform Banff into as populous a place as Carlsbad. The tales I heard of men who came with their faces half-eaten away by the claws of some awful scourge and went with them pink and chubby as a child's were marvellous, but I believe they were true.

After lunch M. and I sallied forth to ride with Captain H. Two undersized, goose-rumped animals were waiting for us, a roan and a bay; M. decided the roan was up to most weight, and gave it to me. The gallant captain appeared on a small breedy-looking chestnut, with a beautiful crest, which looked plucky enough for anything; but I was certainly astonished when he told me that this little beast was carrying 278 lb. or nearly twenty stone, and would carry him sixty miles a day for as long as he wanted him to.

We had a capital ride through pine forests, and up the zig-zag mountain paths to the top of a good-sized hill, from which we got a magnificent panorama of the snow-clad mountains, the dark forest slopes, and the rivers tracing silver lines along the valleys. In one place H. pointed out the spot where he'd seen a bear, when taking a party like ourselves to see this same view. He went back in due course with his party, got his rifle, and returned and shot the bear. Since leaving Banff I have met, by one of those curious chances which are so continually happening, a lady who was one of the party,

and she told me the episode of the bear at Banff without having an idea that I had ever seen the man who shot it, or been at the place where it was shot.

On the way home we came to a narrow path across which a good-sized tree had fallen. I saw M. put up his eye-glass with a nervous air; but there was no escape. It had to be negotiated, and M., in a somewhat unbusinesslike fashion, negotiated it. When we got in to the hotel I offered the captain a drink; it is the conventional thing to do, and even though the practice of drinking rye-whisky neat before meals is alarmingly common in Canada, one cannot afford to disregard polite usages; M. went off declaiming against such unholy practices, and a quarter of an hour later was over-eating himself horribly at dinner. I never saw so small and attenuated a man consume so much.

On that particular occasion I ate lamb after walnuts, which caused the waiter great agony of soul. After that I had a liqueur, which revolted M., who himself was torpid with food. Previous to this I had a great joke with M. He wanted a rye-whisky, and in his desuetude and confusion he ordered a bottle instead of a glass. I was consumed with laughter, whereupon he tried to rehabilitate his character by declaring that he had spoken about the drink question on the platform. I told him that in my opinion this only tended to exaggerate the enormity of his conduct, and that unless he promised to drink the whole bottle before he went to bed I should wire to the Radical agent in his constituency and publish the horrid details of the backsliding of the elect. This provided laughter for the rest of the evening—merriment begotten of the mountain air.

September 12.

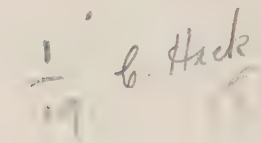
I learn from H. something of the present lot of him who was wont to be described as "the noble red man." His redness remains, but his patent of nobility is no

longer patent. Certainly the Government of Canada seems to have behaved exceedingly well to these dispossessed marauders. Like the wild beasts in Yellowstone Park, on the far side of the frontier, the Indians in Canada are compelled to reside within certain definite limits—styled a "reservation," for fear of their becoming extinct. As no man in the National Park is allowed to use powder and lead in the pursuit, with intent to kill, of the animals therein protected, so, within the area of the reservation, is the fatal "fire water," destructive to the body of the red man, equally prohibited.

Nay, but the Canadians actually do more for the preservation of their wild beasts than the Americans do for theirs; for in Yellowstone Nature provides grass gratis for the buffalo, whereas in Canada it is Government who provides bread and meat gratis for the Indian. Furthermore, a bountiful Government gives seed, grain and implements, and the produce of their harvests is bought up by Government. Government educates the piccaninnies—offspring of more than ever prolific squaws, and Government looks forward with confidence to the days when the Red man shall cease from receiving outdoor relief and shall gather into his barns the product of his honest toil, and wear upon his honoured back the robe of civic office. O fatuous Government! Can the leopard change his spots? Or what moral is to be learned from study of the history of the administration of the Poor Law?

Of a troth, simple Government, thy faith would remove mountains were it not that the Indian is minded to keep them for his own hunting grounds.

From this, my dear Bobbie, you will perceive, with your usual acumen, that the Government of Canada, in more senses than one, may be said to have its reservations.



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